



MCEC
Minnesota Career
Education Center

Minnesota Department of Corrections'
Minnesota Career Education Center
ABE Consortium Narrative
2023

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Section 1: Overview

1.1 Provide an overview of the consortium.

a. Geographic area of service

The geographic area of service for the Minnesota Department of Corrections (MNDOC) ABE Consortium includes nine Minnesota Correctional Facilities (MCFs) located throughout the state of Minnesota. The special population served is Adult Basic Education (ABE) eligible incarcerated adults residing in MNDOC facilities. The nine ABE sites are in Faribault, Lino Lakes, Oak Park Heights, Rush City, St. Cloud, Shakopee, Stillwater, Togo, and Willow River/Moose Lake. ([Click here](#) for map and population list per facility.) The education program for MNDOC is referred to as Minnesota Career Education Center (MCEC.)

The Red Wing facility houses the MNDOC's juvenile male population but also has a small, separate section for minimum custody adult males. The adults at Red Wing are short-term and not included in the MNDOC ABE data. The Red Wing juvenile population is also not included in the ABE data, as juvenile learners attend Walter Maginnis High School, an on-site high school education program.

The St. Cloud facility serves as the intake facility for all incoming adult males. Seven other facilities house only adult males. Incarcerated males transfer between facilities based on various security, programming, and treatment needs. The Shakopee facility houses the MNDOC's adult female population. The Shakopee, Togo, and Willow River facilities run "Challenge Incarceration Programs" (CIP), minimum security boot camp programs which allow individuals who are convicted of non-violent crimes to be considered for early release.

Most incarcerated individuals will not be released in the area surrounding their resident facility but are released in the county in which they committed their felony or where they resided six months prior to confinement. Therefore, every facility is as a statewide facility for services, including Tribal Nations.

On January 1, 2023, 8,142 incarcerated adults were housed in MNDOC facilities, including 7,598 males and 554 females. This count was significantly lower than the MNDOC's pre-COVID average daily population of approximately 10,000 individuals. The average age of the population was 39 years old, with 1,505 individuals over 50 years old. One-fourth (25%) did not have a secondary credential, while 56% did have a secondary credential. An additional 18% had some college experience. 71% reported being single, 13% reported being married, and 12% divorced

or separated. About half (51%) reported as white, 37% as black, and 9.4% as American Indian. Over a third (36%) committed their crime in Hennepin County or Ramsey County.

This narrative uses examples from various facilities to demonstrate processes for the entire consortium. Although some details may vary slightly from facility to facility, the ABE framework is consistent throughout the nine adult facilities.

b. Description of and data about the target population for ABE services

Individuals who have been incarcerated (i.e., felons) are a historically marginalized population. MCEC incarcerated population also represents other historically oppressed groups including women, certain racial/ethnic groups, LGBTQ, individuals with disabilities, older individuals, and those of lower socioeconomic status.

The primary target population is the 25% of individuals who do not have a secondary credential, or about 2,038 individuals on any given day. As the MNDOC student population is ever-changing with admittance and releases, the number increases significantly over a year. For the FY22, 4,123 individuals were served by MCEC ABE (SiD data.)

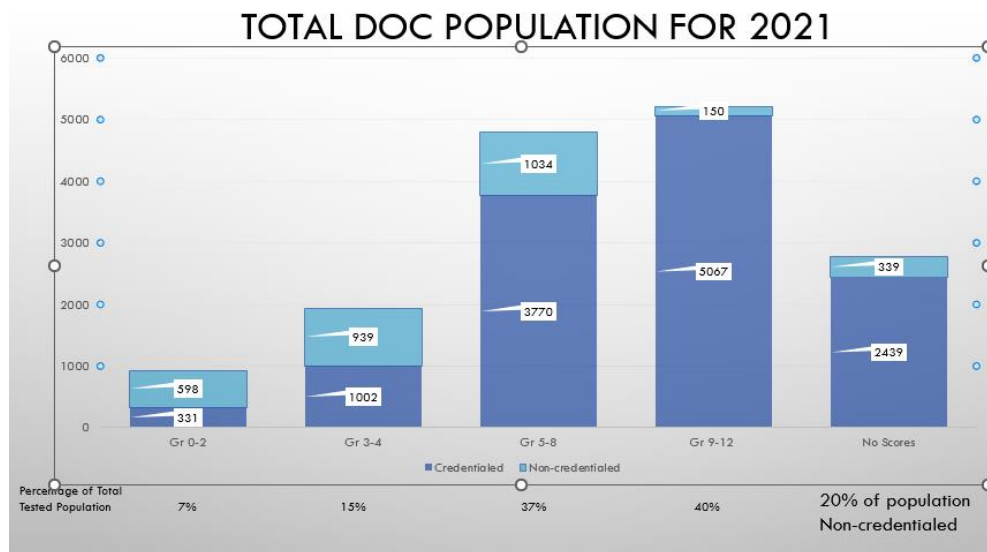
Corrections: 7/1/2021-6/30/2022

Pre Test EFL	# of Distinct Students
ABE Level 1	194
ABE Level 2	1417
ABE Level 3	1510
ABE Level 4	797
ABE Level 5	90
ABE Level 6	22
ESL Level 1	4
ESL Level 2	12
ESL Level 3	22
ESL Level 4	25
ESL Level 5	19
ESL Level 6	11
Subt Total	4123

SiD data for the same date range indicated the MCEC ABE student population had the following characteristics:

Race Ethnicity		Education Level		Age Group	
41%	White	56%	Grades 9-12	67%	25-44
36%	Black/African American	29%	Secondary diploma/alternative	14%	19-24
10%	American Indian	5%	Secondary equivalent	11%	45-54
9%	Hispanic	3%	Grades 6-8	3%	55-59
3%	Asian	1%	Grades 1-5	2%	60+

Although incarcerated individuals who do not have a secondary credential are our primary target population and are typically serviced, there are also many incarcerated individuals who possess secondary credentials but do not have secondary level skills. In fact, 5,103 individuals with secondary credentials scored below 9th grade on the TABE reading test in 2021.



c. Description of the ABE students typically serviced

MCEC has identified four target groups among its population:

- 1) Individuals without a secondary credential with NRS Levels 4-6
- 2) Individuals without a secondary credential with NRS levels 1-3
- 3) Individuals with a secondary credential with NRS Levels 1-3
- 4) Individuals with a secondary credential with NRS Levels 4-6

Numerous studies have shown a secondary credential is the first step in reducing recidivism (Bozick et.al., 2018; The United States Department of Justice Archives, 2017; Duwe & Henry-Nickie, 2021). The Vera Institute of Justice (2017) found incarcerated people who participate in such programs are 43 percent less likely to recidivate than those who do not. Therefore, Groups 1 and 2 are the primary focus of MCEC ABE programs.

Group 1: Individuals without a secondary credential with NRS Levels 4-6

The first target group consists of individuals without a secondary credential (currently 1,559 incarcerated individuals). Only 6% of this group have high school equivalent skills based on their TABE scores. However, once a valid NRS Functioning Level of ABE 4 or higher in reading and math is demonstrated, they can typically be supported in completing their secondary credential in six months or less. When learners test below this level, they must first participate in ABE preparatory instruction to build the skills necessary to successfully master secondary-level content and materials.

Currently MCEC has awarded more MN Standard Adult Diplomas than any other ABE consortium in the state, and MCEC has consistently been in the top performing programs in GED Testing Services' analysis of GED completion, indicating that MCEC's programming for this group of learners has been effective. MCEC also supports learners in attaining a high school diploma through credit completion or credit recovery. This option is often popular among our younger (21 and under) learners.

Year	GED Diploma Recipients	MN Standard Adult Diploma Recipients	High School Diploma (credit completion) Recipients
FY18	395	90	57
FY19	356	89	56
FY20	224	83	34
FY21	144	19	28

FY22	170	62	23
FY23 (to Jan)	101		

MCEC ABE courses are strongly aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), ACES/TIF standards and the Digital Literacy standards via the Northstar Digital Literacy (NDL) program. CCRS is currently integrated into all levels. The rigor of CCRS instruction prepares the learners for post-secondary programs. The ACES “Transitions Integration Framework” (TIF) is also integrated into every level and content area of ABE instruction, to ensure our learners are being exposed to employability skills and career exploration. Learners can build their digital literacy skills by completing NDL activities and demonstrate their knowledge by earning a NDL certificate.

Groups 2 and 3: Individuals with and without a secondary credential with NRS levels 1-3

A larger percentage (58%) of our learners demonstrate an NRS Functioning Level of ABE 1-3. We readily acknowledge that this percentage may be overrepresented, as various factors impact our learners’ capacity to put forth their best effort when being TABE-tested during their first weeks of incarceration. Classroom instruction and additional assessment provide a better profile of learners’ capabilities and needs over time. As part of the person-centered pilot described in Section 1.3, we are examining the sequencing of intake activities, including the timing of TABE testing, to improve validity of results.

Also included in this group is the 7% of our students who are English Learners (EL). Until COVID restrictions reduced direct instruction time and ability to TABE test for level gains, MCEC had consistently realized strong level gains for ABE NRS Level 1 -3 and EL students. The DOC continues to slowly recover in terms of post-testing rates and level gains.

Level Gain Rate	FY 18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY 22	FY23
ABE NRS Level 1	52.6%	52.6%	51.6%	42.2%	38%	36%
ABE NRS Level 2	49.6%	39.5%	36.0%	22.0%	23%	28%
ABE NRS Level 3	53.8%	47.6%	34.2%	27.3%	14%	17%
ESL Overall	58.5%	56.7%	49.5%	31.5%	33%	34%

MCEC analyzes measurable skill gains by facility. Facility-by-facility analysis suggests providing customized learning experiences for target populations often leads to a higher level of measurable skill gains for that population. As part of MNDOC's person-centered pilot program, the feasibility of facilitating learner transfers to facilities offering tailored educational programs is being examined.

Individuals in Group 2 often release into the community with no secondary credential, no industry certificate, and limited civics education; individuals in Group 3 often release into the community with no industry certificate and limited civics education. These learners face many challenges when returning to their communities and often feel disenfranchised from civic responsibilities and rights (Lee, Porter & Comfort, 2015).

Historically, the focus of MCEC ABE programs has been on improving these learners' reading and math skills. MCEC is examining the IET model for Groups 2 and 3, which will provide learners adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training.

Group 4: Individuals with a secondary credential with NRS Levels 4-6

The odds of recidivism decrease as incarcerated people achieve higher levels of education. The Bureau of Justice Statistics studies found a 43% reduction in recidivism rates for incarcerated individuals who participate in prison education programs (Durose & Antenangeli, 2021). Indeed, the higher the degree, the lower the recidivism rate: 14% for those who obtain an associate degree, 5.6% for those who obtain a bachelor's degree, and 0% for those who obtain a master's degree. In 2013, the Bard Prison Initiative in New York reported a recidivism rate of less than 4 percent among its alumni.

Education within MCEC boosts highly effective adult education and literacy programs, comprehensive workforce preparation (a.k.a. transition to postsecondary and career) programs, twenty-two (22) well-established career- technical (CT) training programs and an increasing number of two- and four-year degree programs, delivered by a range of higher education partners. These programs have historically occurred consecutively, with each program focused on a distinct set of learning outcomes.

In 2020, MCEC began implementing an open admissions approach to post-secondary enrollment. By eliminating standardized test entry requirements for our higher education programs, we intended to target justice involved adults who previously would have been excluded from participation. This created the opportunity for MCEC to develop support services

for ABE-eligible learners enrolled in career technical and other post-secondary courses and programs that lead to higher education certificates, diplomas and/or academic degrees. In 2021, MCEC was chosen to participate in the U.S. Department of Education's, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education's (OCTAE) Integrated Education and Training (IET) in Corrections pilot project technical assistance (TA) activities. This assistance was instrumental in helping us develop and implement IET within a correctional setting.

MCEC has recently developed Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs at the MCF-Moose Lake and MCF-Faribault, to build career pathways for MCEC learners at every skill level. The new MCEC IET model provides adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities and workforce training concurrently and contextually and focused on a specific occupational cluster. Connections with workforce centers and employers ensure learners make a smooth transition to their communities. MCEC has been evaluating the effectiveness of these programs as a pedagogical and procedural bridge between ABE and career technical programming. To date, MCF-Moose Lake has implemented MDE approved IET programs for cabling (C-Tech) and carpentry, and MCF-Faribault has implemented an MDE-approved IET program for manufacturing. Early program evaluation indicates that, although students with lower TABE skills are being enrolled in these programs, they are meeting industry expectations and overall program completion remains high. Two new IET applications were recently submitted to MDE for approval, and three additional IET programs have been proposed.

MCEC is also working to increase the bandwidth of learners enrolled in higher education (college) courses by ensuring that comprehensive support is available to strengthen individual and collective capacity for high level achievement. A co-requisite developmental education program was recently launched at the MCF-Moose Lake, and MCEC intends to explore additional academic support and wrap-around services for college-bound ABE learners. To advance this work, MCEC staff and college partners participated in the Developmental Education Symposium in February 2023.

All Learners:

All learners can enroll in "conditional" content courses. Examples include cognitive or critical thinking skills courses and re-entry transition classes. For learners enrolled in one or more core ABE instructional content class during the same ABE year, the hours spent in conditional content classes are included in our annual contact hours.

All MCEC basic education programming leads students towards self-sufficiency. MCEC enrichment programs (e.g., MN Prison Writer's Workshop, Reading is Fun, and Parenting/Family

skills), along with employment opportunities within the facility or with our MINNCOR partners, allow for application of learning in a real-life context.

MCEC has identified the following ABE priorities, which will be articulated in our ABE Narrative:

- Minimize the wait list for mandated (no credential) students.
- Support post-secondary students (IETs and Dev Ed).
- Provide educational advising to support MNDOC's person-centered processes.
- Address the accommodation needs of students with disabilities (Section 1.3 and Section 7).
- Support and expand the use of technology (Section 6).

d. Current number and roles of staff and overview of ABE programming sites across the consortium

The State of MN, and therefore MNDOC, follows a formal hiring process. Education directors work directly with our agency's Human Resources (HR) division in all hiring transactions. A MNDOC HR staffing representative is dedicated to education, which helps ensure consistency in educational hiring practices.

The MNDOC ABE staff include:

- An ABE Manager/Director of Education
- Eight Facility Education Directors
- Forty-three (43) licensed ABE teachers and ten (10) licensed substitute teachers
- Nineteen (19) ABE support staff

Administrators

The MNDOC's ABE Manager oversees the entire ABE program, coordinating equitable services across the agency and ensuring compliance to state and federal rules, regulations, and policies. The ABE Manager also serves as the Director of Special Education, providing program development, coordination, and evaluation; in-service training; and general special education supervision and administration of all MNDOC's Special Education Programs; and serving as the MCEC ADA Education Administrative Liaison.

Facility education directors supervise and coordinate facility ABE programs in accordance with the Education Division mission, vision, and strategic plan; Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) rules and guidelines; and MCEC endorsed best practices and serve as Facility ADA Education Coordinators.

Education directors meet every other week to discuss day-to-day operations. On the opposite weeks, they meet with education management to review procedures and new initiatives and share facility updates. Education directors conduct staff meetings at least one a month to share information and receive feedback on current initiatives.

Teachers

MCEC ABE teachers must hold and maintain a current Minnesota teaching license issued by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). The State Residential Schools Education Association (SRSEA) is the exclusive representative for all employees in the special teacher classification. MCEC has established a Continuing Education Committee, sanctioned by the MDE. The committee approves and uploads individual clock hour renewal units and relicensing data to the PELSB relicensing database.

Every new ABE teacher participates in ABE Foundations (new teacher training). At the facility level, new staff members undergo one-on-one orientation with the facility education director and are assigned a mentor. All new ABE staff are provided an overview of MCEC education programming and ABE standards and trained on the DOC's internal database (COMS) and state's Student Information Database (SiD). Other standard training includes security procedures and policies, facility operations procedures, class schedules and attendance processes, as well as online curricula. Teachers are provided an opportunity to take a TABE reading and/or math test, as well as one of the GED Ready tests.

A teacher from each facility serves on the ABE Best Practices Working Group, along with two education directors and the ABE manager. The Working Group's purpose includes:

- To serve as a forum to establish best practices by bringing forward new and innovative ideas and meaningful solutions in a constructive and respectful manner.
- To ensure consistency of ABE operations across all facilities.
- To ensure that direct lines of communication are established and maintained related to ABE operations.

Discussion topics have included distance learning options and procedures, TABE testing policy revisions, professional development, onboarding new teachers, teacher stress, and technology updates, among other topics.

Support staff

MCEC employs support staff under the classification of Corrections Teaching Assistants (CTAs). The minimum qualification for these positions is an associate degree or higher, or a high school diploma or GED and two full years of full-time study, or a passing score (460 or higher) on the ParaPro assessment. Support staff are critical to the ABE program, as they assist teachers in the classroom, perform data entry, administer assessments, and provide other essential services. Support staff who administer assessments must complete proctor training for each assessment and demonstrate the ability to administer the test within standardization requirements. MN ABE Support Network has identified Southwest ABE to provide support and resources to those administering assessments. The mnabeassessment.com website provides information on trainings and informational links, including presentation slideshows for the TABE and CASAS. Support staff also receive support and training from the Support Professionals Resource Advisory Committee (SPARC).

e. Brief overview of ABE programming sites across consortium

All sites provide services to all NRS levels for English Language Arts (ELA) and math. A common course description is used by all sites to ensure cohesive instruction when individuals transfer between sites. Services may be provided in individual leveled classes or using a one-room schoolhouse format.

Site	Facility Capacity	# of Teachers	# students July 2022 to Jan 2023	ELA Level AB	ELA Level CD	ELA Level E	Math Level AB	Math Level CD	Math Level E
Faribault	2026	12	498	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lino Lakes	1325	3	52	X	X	X	X	X	X
Moose Lake	1057	7	335	X	X	X	X	X	X
Oak Park Heights	444	1	36	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rush City	1018	4	202	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shakopee	656	4	193	X	X	X	X	X	X
St. Cloud	1058	5	948	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stillwater	1484	4	265	X	X	X	X	X	X
Togo	90	1	65	X	X	X	X	X	X
Willow River	177	1	112	X	X	X	X	X	X

Site	Employability (ADP)/ Foundations	Northstar Digital Literacy	Science (ADP)	Social Studies (ADP)	ESL Beg.	ESL Inter.	ESL Adv.
Faribault	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lino Lakes	X		X	X	X	X	X
Moose Lake	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Oak Park Heights							
Rush City		X			X	X	X
Shakopee		X			X	X	X
St. Cloud	X		X	X	X	X	X
Stillwater		X	X	X	X	X	X
Togo		X					
Willow River							

A direct instruction model is generally used to deliver lessons to groups of 10-20 students. All classrooms have interactive smartboards which can access the internet for educational resources.

1.2 Provide data on the consortium's success in improving skills for ABE students

MCEC documents educational benefit to its population, in part, through measurable skill gains realized by learners, including achievement of at least one educational functioning level as defined by the NRS. The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) ABE weighted target for measurable skill gain for ABE-leveled participants is 43%. Although COVID restrictions and shutdowns in FY20 and FY21 reduced overall progress for MCEC students, learners did realize moderate skills gains.

Fiscal Year & Population	DOC level gain rate	Weighted Target Ranking
FY19 ABE overall	• 47.4%	Exceeds NRS target
FY19 ESL overall	• 56.7%	Exceeds NRS target
FY20 ABE overall	• 34.3%	
FY20 ESL overall	• 49.5%	Exceeds NRS target
FY21 ABE overall	• 25.8%	
FY21 ESL overall	• 31.5%	
FY22 ABE overall	• 22.7%	
FY22 ESL overall	• 33.0%	
FY23 (to Jan) overall	• 24.8%	
FY23 (to Jan) ESL overall	• 34.2%	Exceeds NRS target

The MCEC also documents educational benefit to its population through attainment of a secondary credential.

SiD GED, High School Diploma (HSD), and ADP graduate demographics
as reported at intake into ABE programming:

Year	Total graduates	Not US born	Not English speaking
FY18	452	7%	11%
FY19	413	6%	6.5%
FY20	301	13%	12%
FY21	166	9%	7%
FY22	230	16%	16%
FY23 (to Jan)	183	11%	12%

On January 1, 2022, of the group who entered without a secondary credential, 36% had attained a secondary credential prior to their release.

Race/ethnicity of graduates was analyzed to ensure the representation of graduates matched or exceeded the representation in the general population of ABE. For MNDoc overall, about half of the population (51%) reported as white, 37% as black, and 9.4% as American Indian. In ABE, about 45% reported as white, 37% as black, and 6.5% as American Indian.

	FY21	FY22	FY23 (through Jan)
American Indian or Alaskan Native	6%	5.70%	8.2%
Asian	1.8%	1.70%	1.6%
Black or African American	39.8%	33.90%	36.6%
Hispanic	7.2%	12.10%	7.1%
Two or More Races	1.8%	1.30%	0.6%
White	43.4%	45.20%	45.9%

Prior to FY21, enrollment eligibility for career technical classes were limited to only those with a secondary credential and ninth grade or higher TABE reading score. Those students, in general, performed well in the post-secondary programs, but 60% of all MNDoc incarcerated persons were not eligible to enroll. That hurdle was removed in the fall of 2020.

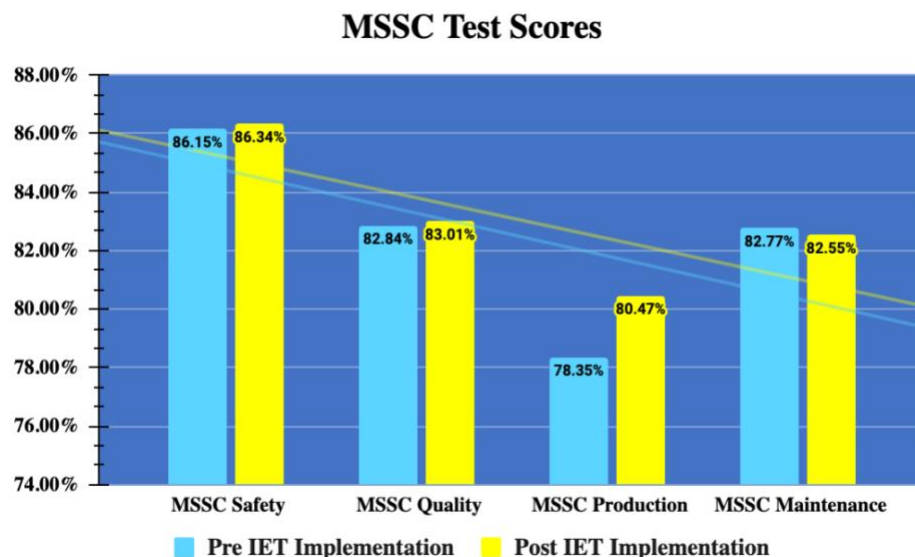
In December 2021, the first MCEC Integrated Education and Training (IET) program was approved by MDE: Moose Lake C-Tech (cabling) program. Prior to IET, C-Tech students' TABE reading scores fell within the 9th -12th grade range. The fourteen-chapter average quiz scores for these students had ranged from 66% to 90%, with an overall average of 78%. With IET support, C-Tech students' TABE reading scores fell within the 3rd to 12th grade range. The fourteen-chapter average quiz scores for these students ranged from 76% to 100%, with an overall average of 90%. Post IET, test scores for the most difficult chapter increased from an average quiz score of 66% to 100%.

Shortly after, the MCF-Faribault IET Manufacturing program was approved. Baseline performance data for manufacturing students with 9th -12th grade TABE reading skills (pre-pandemic and pre-IET) revealed graduation rates between 31% -73%, with less than 55% of the students attaining production technician certification.

Student data pre-IET Manufacturing Program

Year	Enrolled	% Graduated	% Earned CPT
2017	29	31%	31%
2018	38	61%	42%
2019	51	73%	55%

Since 2022, students with TABE reading scores from the 1st to 8th grade level have been accepted into the IET Manufacturing program. Only 17% of the students have scored above 8th grade reading.



Not only did students with lower academic skills participate in the programs, but with IET support, the students were more successful in learning the materials and attaining industry certification.

1.3 Provide evidence of the organization’s ability to serve eligible adults with disabilities, including learning disabilities

In 2019, MNDOC developed an ambitious agency strategic plan. One of the agency’s central strategies for carrying out this plan is to develop a person-centered approach to all agency operations. The plan includes a comprehensive intake and assessment process focusing on all components of the individual’s life. As part of that process, MCEC has implemented an intake program which culminates with an individual advising session and the development of a comprehensive Personal Education Plan. This process provides individuals their first opportunity to self-identify as having learning and other disabilities.

Trainings and discussions related to the use of classroom accommodations to proactively meet the needs of all learners, including learners with disabilities, occur on a regular and ongoing basis. MCEC teachers are encouraged to employ various classroom and assignment accommodations including breaks, stand-up desks, noise cancelling headphones, study carrels, peer tutoring, multiple methods to demonstrate knowledge, intervention software, sensory tools and positive behavioral interventions and supports. Each facility has an Accessibility Library available for student needing general accommodations.

Accessibility Library Materials

Page magnifiers	Reading glasses	Colored overlays
Guided highlight strips	Talking calculators	Large key calculators
Ear plugs	Noise cancelling headphones	Fidgets
Pencil cushions	Large print keyboards	Adaptive computer mice
Erasable highlighters	Scanning reader pens	Teacher amplification

IT-related needs

Screen reader	Immersive Reader	Dictate (speech to text)
Tell me	Color filters	Closed captioning

MCEC provides a full range of specialized instruction for students who qualify for special education services. Each student with a special education disability is provided the specialized instruction and related services appropriate to their individual needs. Services to meet the

special education needs, goals and objectives of a student are determined on an individual basis. Most students receive services in their general class setting. The DOC employs a Director of Special Education who oversees DOC-wide special education services and works directly with the MDE to ensure compliance with federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. The DOC also employs licensed special education teachers at many sites.

MCEC has developed a comprehensive plan to assist facility education programs in identifying, providing, and documenting appropriate ADA accommodations for students with a disability that substantially limits a major life activity (e.g., learning). This includes informing students of the process for requesting educational programming or third-party testing accommodations and modifications and examples of available accommodations and modifications. MCEC administrators have worked with facility ADA coordinators and the DOC Director of Health Services to establish ways in which facility ADA, health and behavioral health staff are able to support us in this work. In addition, licensed special education teachers, a licensed school psychologist and the Director of Special Education are trained and available to assist in determining the existence of an educational disability and appropriate educational accommodations, if needed.

In 2019, all DOC staff were required to complete an online training entitled “Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Defining the ADA and the DOC Policy.” When needed, DOC consults with MN ABE disability specialists at PANDA for support in learner intervention, disability screening, and guidance in developing learning resources appropriate for individual student needs. ABE students also have access to health and behavioral health services within the facility. For standardized testing (TABE, GED, CASAS, and others), the publishers’ procedures are followed when providing or requesting accommodations.

Each learner’s needs are considered individually, and approved accommodations are documented in a written accommodation plan which is implemented in educational programming and reviewed with the student annually. A student whose request for educational modification(s) is denied or who is not satisfied with approved alternative modification(s) may seek reconsideration of their request or a reevaluation of their disability or medical condition by appealing to the DOC’s ADA Compliance Coordinator at Central Office.

Section 2: Accountability

2.1 Describe the governance and decision-making processes in place between the fiscal agent and its members. Indicate the fiscal agent and all additional members.

a. Indicate the fiscal agent and all additional members of the consortium

The MCEC ABE consortium operates within systems (State of Minnesota and Department of Corrections) that have clearly defined policies and practices for fiscal management and audits. MCEC follows the standards and recommendations of the American Correctional Association (ACA) and the National Correctional Education Association (CEA) for accountability and implementation of best practices in correctional education.

The nine MCEC facility ABE programs or “sites” within the MNDOC are managed by eight Education directors and directly supervised and managed as a consortium by the Director of Education. MNDOC is the fiscal agent for state and federal funds and is not part of any independent school district’s accounting program. The MCEC ABE program receives federal and state ABE funding and is also supported with DOC general funding.

The MNDOC finance department processes all ABE transaction requests and oversees the fiscal distribution of ABE funds. Budgeted salary expenses for all MCEC ABE staff are encumbered by finance at the beginning of each fiscal year. MCEC ABE currently employs an ABE Manager/Director of Education, eight (8) Education Directors, forty-three (43) licensed ABE teachers and ten (10) licensed substitute teachers, and nineteen (19) ABE support staff. Purchases are completed using a DOC purchasing card or through the electronic inter office request (EIOR) process. Using the EIOR system, a purchase request is made, the budget manager approves the purchase, and DOC finance buyers complete the transaction. Upon receipt, the invoice is approved for payment by the purchaser.

b. Indicate which members are ABE providers that receive funding to run their own ABE programming

The Director of Education generates an annual budget based on all ABE funding sources and provides each facility ABE program with a current expense budget for the fiscal year. Education Directors, with input from staff, develop an annual spending plan. The Director of Education meets twice a year with each Education Director to review spending and upcoming needs. Education Directors can access the DOC Data Warehouse to review current budget information. A central office current expense budget is also maintained to cover consortium-wide curriculum and technology purchases and training.

c. Describe consortium meetings, including frequency, typical agenda items, and invited/required participants with expectations for their attendance

During the COVID pandemic, MCEC education directors began meeting virtually every other week to discuss day-to-day operations. On the opposite weeks, they meet with education management to review procedures and new initiatives and share facility updates. All education administrators are required to attend.

Beginning January 2023, monthly in-person education administration all-day retreats have been held at Central Office in St. Paul. The retreats are coordinated by the Director of Education and all education directors are required to attend. The MNDOC Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner routinely attend the retreats to provide relevant agency updates. Typical agenda items include program updates, facility updates, policy and procedure reviews, data discussions, and special topics.

Education Directors are expected to conduct at monthly mandatory education staff meetings to disseminate pertinent information and gather feedback on current initiatives. All unit and facility education department meeting minutes must be maintained electronically.

d. Indicate how and when the annual consortium agreement is developed and signed by the consortium members

The MNDOC consortium is comprised of nine MCEC facility ABE program sites, but no other consortium members. The Director of Education serves as the ABE consortium manager. The nine MCEC facility ABE programs or “sites” within the MNDOC are managed by eight Education directors. Because the MNDOC is the only member of the MNDOC/MCEC consortium, there is no need to develop an annual consortium agreement.

2.2 Describe the program quality and accountability plans and procedures for consortium fiscal agent and all members.

a. Indicate how the fiscal agent ensures that ABE providers in the consortium spend funding appropriately and exclusively for the purposes of running adult education services, and how the fiscal agent ensures that caps on spending for administration are not exceeded

MCEC complies with federal and state statutes and rules for administering our education programs and ACA/CEA Standards are followed as best-practices guidelines. MCEC programs are regularly audited by MN DOC Finance to assure they are following GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles). ABE grants are overseen by a Finance Grants Specialist Coordinator who works in tandem with the MNDOC Director of Education to ensure that ABE funding is appropriately managed and reconciled at the end of each fiscal year. The Finance Grants

Specialist Coordinator serves as the account register and the Director of Education serves as the application and budget approver. The MNDOC Director of Education is responsible for creating and monitoring ABE budgets and ensuring that all ABE state and federal funds are appropriately expended, as well as supervising and training Education Directors.

The MNDOC Chief Financial Officer oversees all fiscal matters for the MNDOC and advises the Director of Education as needed. Each education director and the site's local finance department staff are responsible for ensuring individual program compliance. The Director of Education regularly attends MDE provided webinars and in-person trainings around program policy, procedures, and financial internal controls. All MNDOC staff are provided annual professional development related to new policies, procedures, and financial management. MCEC also employs a Finance/Grants Education Specialist who manages education funding sources for the education unit as well as external grants and contracts with both public and private education-related organizations.

Most ABE administrator and some ABE teacher and support staff positions are funded with MNDOC general funding, which ensures that the caps on spending for ABE administration are not exceeded and that positions assigned both ABE and non-ABE tasks are funded accordingly.

b. Indicate how the fiscal agent ensures that ABE providers in the consortium adhere to all federal and state ABE law, policy and guidance for operating ABE programming

Responsibility for ABE budget management resides with the consortium MNDOC Director of Education. MNDOC has a very clearly defined process for all matters related to fiscal management. Annual budget planning begins in the spring prior to the start of each new fiscal year. A planning process results in allocations to each of the ABE sites to cover current expenses (supplies, travel, etc.). Salaries/benefits are managed by a Central Office Senior Accounting Officer. Per agency requirements, the Director of Education presents an annual ABE budget plan to agency leadership. Each site manager meets at least twice each year with Central Office managers to review their budgets, and adjustments are made as needed. The DOC ABE consortium takes pride in being a fiscally responsible user of federal and state ABE funds. MNDOC ABE program staff are trained at least annually on COMS (Corrections Offender Management System) and SID regarding daily attendance, scheduling, awards entry, and payroll for ABE students in an education work assignment. Education directors pull COMS and/or SID reports from the databases to monitor student and classroom attendance and achievements. The education directors collaboratively develop methods for showing appreciation to students who are performing well.

c. Indicate how program performance data (especially information about attendance, pre- and post-testing, measurable skills gain, level gains and other outcome achievement) is monitored at the fiscal agent, provider, site, teacher, and/or class-levels

Monthly audits are conducted by the Director of Education or designee to ensure the data in SiD is accurate and timely. Performance data is also shared with the education directors, so they can

monitor changes and progress in data performance. Facility specific NRS and EFL performance data is reported in quarterly reports from all sites.

Education directors discuss program performance at professional development gatherings and as part of each ABE teacher's annual performance review. As a component of quarterly staff observations and walk-throughs, education directors review student files and attendance sheets with ABE teachers and ABE support staff to be certain the required paper records are being maintained and recorded accurately. The ABE staff keep these files in locked cabinets for five years and then shred them, in accordance with MDE and DOC record retention policies. Student contact hour data is used by education directors in making site-based decisions on classroom locations and staffing levels at each site in collaboration with the Director of Education and facility Associate Warden of Operations. Aggregated COMS and SID data is used in decision-making at Central Office by the Director or Education for policy review, to determine overall program effectiveness, staffing analysis, system accountability, and allocation of financial resources to address deficiencies across the system and at specific sites.

Education policies and related procedures and practices communicate the connection between the consortium's vision and values and its day-to-day operations to all ABE sites.

e. Indicate how and when program performance data is shared and communicated with staff and other stakeholders

MNDOC/MCEC's ABE program reports and monitors program performance following MDE/ABE policies and guidelines for consortium approval, data collection, assessments, etc. Locally, education data including class registration, attendance, and personal education plans, are stored on the DOC's internal offender database (COMS), which serves as our internal and backup system for ABE data. Education staff enter all ABE data onto the state ABE database, SiD. Each site has two or more staff specifically designated as SiD data entry staff. These staff, typically support staff, receive annual training directly from Mary Zimmerli on the database system. A State Program Administrator Technical Specialist has been assigned to oversee the reporting and procedural requirements for the MNDOC/MCEC ABE consortium and to informally monitor and direct the work of SiD data entry staff. SiD questions and issues are discussed among the education director's group regularly during the entire ABE year. Education directors are kept informed of consortium data at a minimum of once/month at regularly scheduled day-long meetings of the education managers' team. ABE data is disseminated on both macro (consortium) and micro (site) levels. Curriculum review teams review data when making recommendations for course description changes, including curriculum resources.

The NRS, EFL, and enrollment data is reviewed and shared at the facility level with facility administration, teachers and other staff once per fiscal quarter. Unrelated to NRS performance data but included in our effort to ensure accountability is our attention to detail in connection to data and document retention. ABE data as recorded in DOC's COMS and SID is disseminated

across the consortium by the MN DOC Director of Education or designee and at the site level by the education directors for continuous program improvement as explained in detail in Attachment C.

2.3. Describe the process(es) used in the consortium to help students develop realistic goals and timelines for educational progress, secondary credential attainment, enrolling in college and/or gaining or improving employment.

a. Explain how these processes vary for different types of students, or for students enrolled in different types of programming

During intake to DOC custody, among other screenings, incarcerated individuals receive a written screening by education staff to determine whether they self-report a secondary credential, a disability, or have had special education services through an Educational History Survey. Following the written educational history screening, education staff conduct a record review, which includes access to relevant medical and mental records in DOC possession. Reviews are documented on the DOC Education Screening form.

Education staff attempt to verify all self-reported secondary credentials. Education staff also review records in DOC possession to further screen for a history of special education or an indication of a disability or medical condition that may interfere with the student's ability to participate in, or benefit from, educational programming. They meet with the student to verify the information documented on the DOC Education Screening form.

Prior to entering ABE programming, incarcerated individuals are provided a Personal Education Inventory form to fill out to identify their educational goals and interests in offered programming and any prior educational challenges which is retained in their electronic file. All new ABE students are required to complete the *Foundations* orientation program, which includes information regarding secondary credential options, DOC education policies and procedures, the process for requesting educational programming or third-party testing accommodations and modifications for individuals with disabilities, and examples of available accommodations and modifications. Students planning to attend post-secondary programs learn and are assessed to understand how their secondary credential completion relates to career technical or college admission, program waiting lists, and the FAFSA application process. Incarcerated individuals interested in employment during and after their incarceration are presented with ideas about how choosing fulltime, part-time, or work-study jobs over others may provide the foundation for their ideal job/career, financial goals, and overall life satisfaction. They are also assessed and evaluated for educational needs using TABE or CASAS assessments. Results of these assessments are documented in the student's electronic file. Any individual interested in or required to complete educational programming are given the option to meet with an education staff to review any educational assessment results, develop a Personal Education Plan (PEP), or for help making a request for reasonable accommodations or modifications in educational programming. This meeting occurs at the intake facility or at the facility the individual is transferred to for educational programming.

MCEC encourages review of the PEP quarterly, but they may be reviewed at any time, especially if a student achieves a goal, is transferred to another facility, or has DOC program and/or life changes that may affect their plan.

Student timelines for goal completion vary depending on their goals, potential barriers, challenges faced, and life/incarcerated circumstances. NRS assessment data is reviewed during quarterly advising sessions to help assure student success. Students that do not meet their quarterly and/or annual goals are reported by their teacher to the education director to assist with recommendations to their PEP.

MCEC ABE students are representative of all types of students residing in MNDOC facilities. MCEC ABE offers diploma equivalence testing services currently with GED for those with qualifying scores and is preparing to offer HiSET soon. MN DOC offers the MN Standard Adult Diploma, or a credit based high school diploma for students that choose these secondary credential options as discussed in more detail in Attachment B.

ABE programming at Minnesota Correctional Facilities may include reading and math instruction; secondary credential preparation; transition to post-secondary, college, and career readiness programming; Integrated Education and Training; and college developmental education. Distance learning and hybrid instruction is available to students who cannot attend classes in-person on a regular basis. Each facility education director must also develop procedures to provide educational programming to students in the literacy target group who are on a restricted status. This is most often accomplished through distance learning. On average MCEC ABE students engage in ABE instruction 180 hours each quarter. Completion of any of MCEC education program is entered into the COMS system to ensure tracking and reporting of data.

2.4. Describe how the consortium adequately identifies, tracks, and reports information about students that may fall within WIOA barriers to employment (public assistance, exhausting MFIP, disability, displaced homemakers, ex-offender, foster care, homeless, learning disabled, low-income, migrant worker, and single parent) in the intake process.

a. How is the consortium utilizing the information collected (such as: specialized referrals, additional services, instructional planning).

All individuals within the prison system fall into the WIOA barriers to employment group. The DOC's ABE consortium has a long-established organizational structure, a high-quality service delivery system, and strong support from commissioner and operations-level leaders within our agency. These factors, together with the established relationships we have with ABE supplementary providers such as ATLAS, MLC, and PANDA, and non-ABE partner organizations such as Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the national Correctional Education Association (CEA), and the Minnesota Prison Writers Workshop, support the notion that we have excellent capacity for and commitment to administering high quality ABE services.

Special education services are available for eligible students. Eligibility criteria and requirements for programming priority are governed by federal and state law and guidelines and monitored by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Upon admission into any secondary education program, upon qualification for GED programming, and once eligible for GED practice tests and exams, education staff provide students with information on the process for requesting educational programming or third-party testing accommodations and modifications for individuals with disabilities, and examples of available accommodations and modifications. A student may request an accommodation or modification within educational programming at any time by completing and signing the Student Request for Modification in Education form.

The MNDOC is a member of a statewide corrections cooperative initiative called MNSIRR (Minnesota's Statewide Implementation of Recidivism Reduction). MNSIRR has multiple levels of planning and implementation with over 100 representatives on various committees and subcommittees. Participating agencies/organizations are MN Association of Community Corrections Act Counties, MN Department of Human Rights, MN Department of Public Safety, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, MN Department of Human Services, MN Department of Education, Second Chance, Office of Justice Programs/A Division of the MN Department of Public Safety, MN Sheriff's Association, and the DOC, all of whom are committed to the work of recidivism reduction. This statewide initiative considers all best practices in garnering the support and resources needed to succeed in the community including supervision strategies, improvements in Treatment Outcomes, Collaborative Case Management, Cognitive Skill Development, and education.

This activity has been very informational for the board members and feedback has resulted in members of boards expressing interest in hiring formerly incarcerated individuals. Also, interest has been expressed in forming taskforce committees to develop strategies for assisting previously incarcerated individuals with job search and employment opportunities, particularly if they have earned credentials (secondary and/or post-secondary) through MCEC education programs.

Due to our students' unique circumstances of being incarcerated and not active in the workforce, our program's relationship with workforce centers is indirect. In a sense the MNDOC operates its own version of a "one-stop" center with internal partners. Our facilities have "Transition Centers" operated by the DOC's Reentry Services Unit where students can access current job postings, work on resumes, and receive assistance with other issues related to their eventual transition back into the community. Reentry Services also coordinates transitions fairs and events, pre-release classes, community/government agency partnerships, and the processes for individuals to transition successfully from their prison sentence obligation to supervised release into their communities toward the collective goal of successful reentry. The transition centers at each facility feature a variety of computer-based programs such as WinWay Resume, CAREERwise (formerly ISEEK) and MNWorks.Net. These programs are accessible to individuals who are within six months to one year of release and community

reentry. The “pre-release” classes cover topics such as life skills, conflict resolution, interpersonal interaction, housing and finance, health, supervised release, career exploration and planning, how to interview and talk about transferrable skills and personal characteristics. The transition centers assist with case management release planning including conditions of release and agent assignment, and help individuals obtain identification such as birth certificates and social security cards.

Another key internal “one-stop” partner is MINNCOR Industries, whose mission is to put incarcerated individuals to work in various industry jobs and offer employment and job readiness training. MINNCOR’s employment and job training programs are known as EMPLOY and “Bridge.” MCEC works closely with these programs to ensure we are enhancing each other’s work and to avoid duplication of efforts. Another internal “one stop” partner is an initiative led by agency leadership called Transition from Prison to Community which focuses on providing training to both staff and incarcerated individuals on topics such as interpersonal relationships and appropriate and respectful communication strategies.

MCEC works with ABE eligible students to provide effective contextualized instruction. Post-secondary and career instruction, employability skills training, and integration of ACES throughout the curriculum all provide learning in context. Career exploration and bridge curriculum has been developed that is career-focused and contextualized in the career sector areas of the career technical post-secondary programs available in our facilities. All DOC basic education programming leads to self-sufficiency. In addition, our students are immersed in the “Transition from Prison to Community” atmosphere described above and have opportunities to demonstrate their learning in their everyday lives and demonstration of learning in a real-life context.

Documents Section Two:

- A. [MNDOC Intake and Orientation Procedures](#)
- B. [MNDOC Assessment Procedures](#)
- C. [MNDOC Contact Hour Tracking Procedures](#)
- D. N/A

Section 3: Professional Development and Training

3.1 Describe the process and criteria (licensure, education, credentials, experience etc.) used in hiring decisions for staff.

The state (and therefore the MNDOC's) hiring processes follow very specific and formal guidelines. MCEC works with the DOC's Human Resources (HR) unit in all hiring transactions. MCEC has an HR staffing representative dedicated to education hires, which helps ensure candidates meet minimum qualifications for the position which they are applying for and that teacher candidates hold or are eligible for a Minnesota teaching license.

Once a pool of candidates who meet the minimum qualification for the position has been provided to the hiring supervisor, "preferred" qualifications are considered. Preferred qualifications are based on established MCEC criteria, as well as the need at the facility/site where the new employee will be located. MCEC always seeks the best candidate for the position and does not disqualify anyone due to potential salary considerations, etc.

MCEC ABE teachers must hold and maintain a current Minnesota teaching license issued by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). The State Residential Schools Education Association (SRSEA) is the exclusive representative for all employees in the teacher classification.

MCEC ABE employs support staff under the classification of Corrections Teaching Assistants (CTA). The minimum qualification for these positions is: an associate degree or higher; or a high school diploma or GED and two full years of full-time study; or a passing score (460 or higher) on the ParaPro assessment. Support staff are critical to the ABE program, as they assist teachers in the classroom, perform data entry, administer assessments, and provide other essential services. CTAs are members of the state's AFSCME collective bargaining group.

Beginning in FY24, the MNDOC/MCEC consortium plans to hire Education Advisors at its intake and larger ABE programs. These staff will be responsible to provide holistic academic and career advising for incarcerated individuals to prepare them to achieve personal, academic, and professional goals during their incarceration and upon release. The position description, qualifications, and classification are currently being determined.

When choosing final candidates for interview, posted "preferred" qualifications are used to reduce the pool to those with specific qualifications for the position. Interviews are conducted with a team of interviewers. Interview committees for teachers typically are made up of 2-3 administrators (including the facility education director/site supervisor.) Interview questions

are, for the most part, standardized across the MCEC, and scoring rubrics are used to score each candidate's response.

The Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) establishes statewide goals for each job category by underutilized protected group based on the most current census available at the time the goals were established. If the comparison shows that a job category underutilizes a protected group, the commissioner establishes a goal for that disparity in the job category. The MNDOC is committed to the establishment and maintenance of an affirmative action program. In accordance with Minnesota statutes and rules, an affirmative action plan is developed every two years. The plan contains specific components, including program objectives and hiring goals for the department. The hiring goals and selection process procedures have been set to eliminate the underutilization of qualified protected group members, except where a bona fide occupational qualification exists. The groups, which the State of Minnesota has determined to be under-utilized in the workforce, include: (1) women, (2) ethnic/racial minorities, and (3) individuals with disabilities.

A synopsis of the hiring steps is as follows:

1. Personnel Transaction Request Form (PTR) submitted. The form must be routed up the chain of command (facility education director, facility finance director, Central Office manager and the associate commissioner) for signatures. Any approver along the way can stop the process.
 - a. Criteria: The minimum qualification for teaching positions is documentation of a bachelor's degree in education AND a current teaching license.
 - b. For some of our ABE teaching positions, any K-12 or ABE license satisfies the minimum requirements. In some cases, a facility needs a specialized license (e.g., Special Education, Secondary Math) and will post the criteria accordingly.
2. Internal posting and bidding process occurs, if appropriate. Management may choose to post internally only if it feels a well-qualified candidate can be secured internally.
3. Posting the vacancy on the state employment website. Education jobs are also posted on the state employment website, EdPost and typically on other sites such as MASA. When posted on these external sites, management still considers internal candidates first.
4. Hiring manager gains access to the online applicant resumes.
5. Ensure referred candidates are minimally qualified. This includes, as mentioned above, checking to ensure the candidates have current licensure.
6. Determine interview pool.
7. Completion and collection of background forms for all interviewees.
8. Develop interview questions/rankings and choose interview panel.
9. Questions reviewed by HR for racial and gender equity.

10. Schedule and conduct Interviews.
11. Review interview results and discuss affirmative action/seniority provisions.
12. HR conducts employment checks and a criminal history check. These checks are usually done on the top candidate.
13. Top candidate(s) must disclose any associations they have with current offenders (inmates) and agree to have a background check to ensure they are not on a predatory offender list.
14. Determine appropriate salary and make offer. All MCEC salary requests must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Education.
15. Send letters to interviewees not selected and provide human resources with all hiring documents.
16. Follow "Employee's First Day" procedures and enroll new staff in DOC "Academy."

3.2 Describe the new staff orientation process and information included.

All new DOC staff participate in a six-week on-the-job training on security and safety called "Academy." Academy encompasses a variety of required online and in-person trainings. New employees learn about security policies and procedures, Code of Conduct, PREA: Prison Rape Elimination Act, First Aid, Suicide Prevention, Seizure Identification, FEMA Emergency Training, and more. When not assigned to academy trainings, new MCEC ABE staff can meet with the facility education director to review education policies and procedures, meet with their mentor, observe in ABE classrooms, and explore ABE curriculum.

a. Indicate how the consortium ensures that new staff receive the training required for their position, such as ABE Foundations, CCRS Foundations, test administration certification and distance learning training

Within the education unit, new staff members undergo one-on-one orientation with the education director and are assigned a mentor/coach. They are provided an overview of MCEC programming and provided with a copy of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), the Transition Framework (TIF/ACES) standards, and the Northstar Digital Literacy (NDL) standards. In addition, each new staff and their mentor work through the New Staff Checklist.

ABE orientation training includes the following: ABE Foundations, ACES Foundations, CCRS Foundations (ELA, Math, or both), Distance Learning 101 and 102, DL Basic Online Course, Standard Adult Diploma 101 Training, and TABE/CASAS/GED testing training, if appropriate. New teachers also attend the Summer Institute, including New Teacher ABE Orientation, and have opportunity to attend the Math Institute, Literacy and Language Institute, and regional events.

New MCEC ABE staff are introduced to the DOC's internal database (COMS) and exposed to the SiD database system as well as other data entry, facility information, and class schedule procedures. Education department processes and procedures are also introduced. Each facility education director must develop and maintain a facility Education Procedures Manual outlining administration, personnel, students, and programs.

Support staff who administer assessments must complete proctor training for each assessment and demonstrate the ability to administer the test within standardization requirements. MN ABE Support Network has identified Southwest ABE to provide support and resources to those administering assessments. The mnabeassessment.com website provides information on trainings and informational links, including presentation slideshows for the TABE and CASAS. Support staff also receive support and training from the Support Professionals Resource Advisory Committee (SPARC).

ABE tutors (incarcerated individuals hired by ABE teachers to support learners in reaching their educational goals) are required to attend Literacy Action Network (LAN) Volunteer Foundations Training or adapted MCEC in-service training.

3.3 Describe how the consortium supports professional development (PD) for staff.

The MCEC consortium places high emphasis on employee retention and believes that our greatest resource is our staff. Developing staff talent and professionalism results in greater satisfaction, less staff discipline, and a consistently high level of instruction. Staff are encouraged to take part in various professional development opportunities, participate and present at statewide ABE events, and participate in advisory and other ABE groups.

The MNDOC/MCEC is represented on the math and language/literacy advisory groups, MN State Standard Adult Diploma and Adult Career Pathways advisory groups, and PANDA's advisory committee.

Numerous professional development opportunities are provided to staff throughout the year with the goal of increasing instructional skills and strategies which lead to improved outcomes for our students. Staff can earn up to one hundred (100) professional development hours per year, with a minimum of forty (40) DOC and education training hours required for each staff annually. Both the facility and MCEC provides a wide variety of on-site PD events including Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), self-defense, and staff-expert-led trainings. Each facility has an employee development department which tracks and organizes training for all employees.

Staff complete training during business hours and are paid for their time. Since the COVID pandemic, MCEC staff have become accustomed to attending on-line trainings but have recently been able to also attend some in-person conferences and training events. Related travel expenses are paid as allowed by DOC and contract language. Intermittent/substitute teachers are utilized for covering classrooms, and CTAs are assigned to cover short-term absences by supervising in the classroom.

a. Describe the process for determining PD needs and priorities at both the consortium and individual staff level

Consortium initiated PD for ABE staff often center around MNABE, LAN, Atlas, PANDA, MDE, and CEA sponsored training events. One of the most popular consortium-initiated PD opportunities is the annual ABE Summer Institute. In addition, one ABE teacher from each facility serves on the ABE Best Practices Working Group, which provides a forum for ABE teachers to recommend and discuss PD opportunities and needs. A mentoring/PD subcommittee was recently developed to address this high priority topic.

Besides attending employer initiated in-service and training, licensed teaches are paid to attend employee-initiated workshops, professional conferences, college courses, in-service programs, and visitations, as well as the two-day annual teacher's convention. Relevant college credits completed on a teacher's own time and recognized by an accredited college or university can be combined with local (MNDOC) training credit to make lane changes to increase their annual salary.

All staff are required to develop professional development goals as a part of their annual performance review process, and teachers are encouraged to complete same and other facility peer observations as a part of the MCEC teacher evaluation process.

b. Indicate which PD activities are mandatory for staff

As MNDOC employees, ABE teachers and support staff are required to take part in both corrections (e.g., security, code of conduct) *and* education PD annually. Licensed teachers must complete 125 hours of MCEC continuing education committee approved trainings and activities, including PELSB mandated events, every five years to renew their licenses. In addition, the DOC requires each full-time employee to accumulate a minimum of 40 training hours annually, including a variety of mandatory trainings. MCEC employees work year-round and provide programming opportunities for students who are in the facility year-round, so they need to negotiate the balance between "prison" or security training and their educational PD needs.

Mandatory in-service trainings for ABE staff are usually related to the introduction of new technology, curriculum, and initiatives or focused on identified needs or deficiencies. Required PD for new ABE staff was discussed in section 3.2a.

c. Indicate how the consortium ensures all staff are aware of appropriate PD opportunities

PD opportunities are promoted by education directors, the ABE Best Practices Working Group, ABE instructors and support staff, and through Atlas monthly emails. When MNABE publishes MN ABE Connect, that information is distributed or made available to all ABE staff. Since most events have no registration fee, most PD requests are approved if classroom coverage can be arranged. Many ABE staff subscribe to MNABE listserv.

Mandatory consortium training events are usually communicated directly from the Director of Education to ABE staff via email. All MNDOC staff have been issued lap top computers and are required to check their email on a regular basis.

d. Indicate the amount and percent of total funding that the consortium sets aside or uses for professional development

The annual amount set aside and used for PD for ABE staff exceeds \$300,000, or approximately 6% of the consortium's annual ABE grant. The PD budget is mainly used to cover registration and travel expenses. In most cases, PD is attended during the regular workday and therefore participating staff also receive salary/benefits for attending and intermittent staff are often brought in to cover their classrooms. These expenses are not accounted for in this total.

Documents Section Three:

- E. [MNDOC Consortium Professional Development Plan](#)
- F. [MNDOC Individual Professional Development Plan Administrative staff](#)
- G. [MNDOC Individual Professional Development Plan Support staff](#)
- H. [MNDOC Individual Professional Development Plan Instructional staff](#)

Section 4: Educational Programming

4.1 Provide an explanation of how high-quality educational services are developed by the consortium (overall quality and coherence).

a. Explain how decisions are made about what kinds of courses and instruction to offer

Prior to the COVID pandemic, MCEC utilized curriculum review committees for NRS Levels 1, 2, 3, 4-6, and ESL. Literacy level committees had a representative from each facility and would review current course content and materials to make recommendations regarding consortium curriculum purchases. In January 2020, the decision was made to change the committees to content area committees, so coherence would be ensured across levels. That structure has not yet been initiated due to capacity issues, but an ABE Best Practices Working Group has since been developed.

Currently the ABE Best Practices group (with ABE teacher representatives from each facility) discuss curricula and core materials. Group members have been trained on CCRS standards in English/Language Arts (ELA), Math, or both and have had additional training with the CCRS Evaluation & High Value Action Alignment Tool in either ELA, Math, or both. Instructional shifts in Math and ELA are being addressed at all facilities with the integration of College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). ABE staff at each facility have completed CCRS Foundations in ELA and/or math. Recently purchased ABE technology and curriculum enhancements were vetted through this group.

Course descriptions have been developed for all ABE courses which identify the standards covered and core materials. All sites utilize these course descriptions when providing instruction to meet the needs of their learner population and to ensure coherence and quality across programs: (Note: The lettered levels refer to the CCR standards level.)

ELA Literacy 1 Level A B

ELA Literacy 2 Level C D

ELA Literacy 3 Level E

Math Literacy 1 Level A B

Math Literacy 2 Level C D
Math Literacy 3 Level E
English Second Language (ESL) Beginning
ESL Intermediate
ESL Advanced
Employability (MN Standard Adult Diploma)
Science (MN Standard Adult Diploma)
Social Studies (MN Standard Adult Diploma)

Education Directors monitor the ABE wait list closely, as the MCEC student population and classroom rosters constantly change, sometimes resulting in the need to adjust a classroom's target population.

In response to a decision to implement an open admissions approach to post-secondary enrollment, MCEC has recently developed Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs at the MCF-Moose Lake and MCF-Faribault, to build career pathways for MCEC learners at every skill level. The new MCEC IET model provides adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities and workforce training concurrently and contextually and focused on a specific occupational cluster. Connections with workforce centers and employers ensure learners make a smooth transition to their communities. Two new IET applications were recently submitted to MDE for approval, and three additional IET programs have been proposed (further explained in Section 4.4).

MCEC is also working to assist the rapidly expanding population of learners enrolled in higher education (college) courses by ensuring that comprehensive support is available to strengthen individual and collective capacity for high level achievement. A co-requisite developmental education program was recently launched at the MCF-Moose Lake, and MCEC intends to explore additional academic support and wrap-around services for college-bound ABE learners.

b. Explain how courses and instruction are evaluated to determine whether they are high quality

Currently MCEC ABE courses and instruction are evaluated to determine their effectiveness through ABE Best Practices Working Group discussions and reviews and classroom observations conducted by the education directors. Prior to the pandemic, MCEC had decided to evolve from NRS leveled curriculum review committees to content area committees to improve coherence from one level to the next in ELA and Math. Now that MNDOC has ended its COVID restrictions, discussions are underway within the ABE Best Practices Working Group to activate those teams.

MCEC teachers are evaluated once a year using a revised version of the state example process, which was developed by an MDE workgroup as an example of best practice in the field. As part of the MCEC teacher evaluation process, education directors now conduct quarterly walk-throughs of every ABE classroom. This has resulted in education directors being in the classrooms more often and allows them to monitor the quality of instruction more closely. Each teacher meets with and works with their director to create an annual professional development plan to enhance their instructional skills and professional knowledge in andragogy and correctional education.

In facilities running one-room schoolhouse models, NRS level gains can be tracked and analyzed to help evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, as student populations are more stable in those facilities. In other facilities, facility level gains and graduates are reviewed quarterly to help ensure high quality instruction and correctional education practices are being utilized.

c. Explain how the consortium ensures that all students have access to sufficient intensity of instruction in order to make learning gains

MCEC offers ABE classes Monday-Friday, year-round, except on holidays or in the event of a program shutdown (which is most often related to security-related issues). Class length varies by facility, with most facilities offering two three-hour sessions per day. MCEC employs various models of service delivery. Teachers use direct instruction, guided practice packets, multimedia, and independent work during class time instruction. Every ABE teacher has an interactive whiteboard. After security training, the teacher can receive elevated access to the internet, which allows them to access videos and other resources on the internet to enhance classroom instruction. Programs have computer labs or in-classroom computers to allow students access to online software programs, such as Aztec and IXL. Many facilities are currently employing a hybrid model, blending modes of face-to-face, online, and distance learning instruction.

During COVID, the MCEC began offering distance learning (DL) instruction to its students. DL options were limited to paper-pencil due to students' inability to access electronic materials in their living units. These resources were adequate in maintaining skills, but many students found the materials less than engaging when utilized long-term. The MNDOC is currently in the process of securing tablets for all MNDOC incarcerated individuals. MCEC is working to ensure that effective ABE content will be available and able to be delivered through the tablets, which will allow the use of distance learning and hybrid instruction to significantly expand.

All facilities provide ABE, ESL, and GED preparation, digital literacy, and career readiness/soft skills (via ACES). All facilities also offer GED testing and instruction for standard adult and high school diploma. As noted in Section 1, MCEC documents educational benefit to its population,

in part, through attainment of a secondary credential. The HiSET will be introduced as a second high school equivalency diploma option soon.

ATLAS sponsors the Numeracy Initiative (MNI) Advisory Team (MNI A-Team), which is designed to strengthen math and numeracy teaching and learning through relevant, meaningful, and effective professional development. The group writes articles and presents webinars, featuring practical math and numeracy resources for instructors, focusing on advanced and transition levels of math instruction. It improves outcomes for learners through more effective numeracy instruction, strengthens math content knowledge, increases awareness of effective instructional strategies for teaching numeracy, and most importantly, applies strategies for CCR math standards. Every facility has had ABE teachers participate in math cohorts, toward the goal of improving student outcomes. A MCEC teacher serves on this advisory team.

Likewise, the Language and Literacy Advisory Team (LLATe') is designed to strengthen language, reading, and writing instruction through relevant, meaningful, and effective professional development, such as the Language and Literacy Institute held every January. A MCEC ABE teacher serves on this advisory team.

An Education Director serves on the Adult Career Pathways Advisory Team. MCEC recently submitted an article on the DOC's journey to IET programming. In addition, two students serve on the Racial Equity Advisory (REAL) group and participate in monthly virtual meetings. ABE students from across the MNDOC participated in the REAL survey.

d. Explain how instruction incorporates the essential components of reading instruction

The term "essential components of reading instruction" means explicit and systematic instruction in:

- phonemic awareness;
- phonics;
- vocabulary development;
- reading fluency, including oral reading skills; and
- reading comprehension strategies. Every Student Succeeds Act, SEC. 9215 (c), p. 365.

The MCEC recently implemented Reading Horizons reading curriculum, a systematic, research-based phonics program available in both online and paper formats. Classroom manuals and computer software are correlated to support each other but can also be used independently. English Language Learners (ELL), as well as learners who demonstrate an NRS Functioning Level of ABE 1-3, benefit from the logical, easy-to-understand foundation for reading, spelling, and pronunciation.

DOC teachers who teach lower functioning students have participated in online chat groups and trainings on practices proven to increase reading achievement using background research and teaching strategies. Materials from the ESL group, featuring level materials for all ABE and ESL learners has been utilized. Many facilities have a licensed reading specialist.

In addition to carefully selected standards-aligned curriculum vetted by the curriculum review committee or ABE Best Practices Working Group, teachers employ best practices and strategies based on rigorous research. The instructional practices in reading include the key shifts in CCRS ELA of complexity, evidence, and knowledge. Complexity involves regular practice with complex text and its academic language and is intertwined with academic vocabulary. Evidence involves reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational. Teachers strive to have learners cite evidence from text, presenting careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information in speaking and writing. Finally, instruction involves building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction. As MCEC implements IET programs with contextualized readings and tasks, the comprehension of informational text will be an essential part of instruction, as most of the reading in the workplace involves informational text.

4.2 Describe how the consortium’s distance/hybrid learning programming has expanded over the past 2 years. Address the lessons learned and best practices adopted in recent years, as well as intentions and plans for continued improvement of distance and hybrid learning.

During the pandemic, paper-based distance learning materials needed to be utilized, as technology-based solutions were not accessible to learners during time periods when MCEC classrooms were closed due to COVID restrictions. Multiple curriculums were identified and approved through the MN ABE Distance Learning approval process, including ReadWorks; NewsELA; CommonLit; Aztec/Kaplan; TABE Scoreboost; TABE Tutor Reading and Math; The Great Courses; and PACE math, English, social studies, science, and life skills. Some MCEC teachers were certified in the Teacher Verification Model (TVM), which allows ABE programs to count proxy hours for asynchronous lessons that have been verified by a TVM certified teacher. The new tablets, which will be provided to all MCEC incarcerated individuals soon, will include several technology-based MN approved learning platforms. The MCEC’s new learning management system, BrightSpace, will also be available to provide learners access to on-line courses and resources. Learners will soon have access to the EBSCO research database, to further enhance their academic success.

The MCEC is committed to being prepared to provide a more seamless transition between classroom instruction and distance learning in the future, so that students' educational needs can be effectively addressed despite imposed security and/or safety restrictions.

4.3 Give an overview of how the consortium has integrated the state's content standards for ABE into instruction to date.

a. Indicate content standards training that staff have participated in

MCEC ABE programs implement and embed the three state required standards: CCRS, TIF/ACES, and Northstar Digital Literacy. These standards have already been identified as best practices based on rigorous research. Course descriptions delineate the standards met in each NRS level of ELA and math. Every MCEC ABE teacher is required to complete CCRS Foundations in reading, math, or both.

ACES/TIF study groups were initially held and TIF activities were shared regularly. Since the pandemic, that practice has not continued. More recently, staff have been encouraged to join the TIF Tuesday presentations. Since transition and re-entry into the community and employment are a primary focus, ACES/TIF skills are an integral part of MCEC's Foundations classes, as are Cognitive Behavior Intervention-Employ classes. With the initiation of IET programming, the use of ACES/TIF continues to gain traction and are being better documented.

b. Describe how instruction has changed as a result of standards integration

Instructional shifts in Math and ELA are being addressed at all facilities with the integration of College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). ABE staff at each facility have completed CCRS Foundations in ELA and/or math. In CCRS cohorts, teachers practiced using the Resource Alignment Tools (RAT) to identify high value actions to improve standards alignment. Teachers were trained in the evidence-based approach to career-focused contextualized basic skills instruction, which is an instructional model using backwards design strategies, and the learning is relevant to work lives of adult learners. Finally, the CCR Observation Tool was utilized during classroom observations to document effective implementation across classrooms and facilities. The ACES Implementation Observation Tool was utilized to ensure ACES-TIF was being embedded in teachers' instruction.

Student movement through the program is based on performance-evidence. Levelled classes/instruction are determined based on TABE scores which reflect CCR standards. Students transferring between facilities can be seamlessly placed based on performance measures and continue moving towards graduation.

c. Describe how the standards have informed changes in course offerings and program structures

Instruction across facilities has improved its coherence and rigor. As students move between facilities, instruction tied to the TABE level and CCR standards is transferable, and students do not need to “start over” at each site. With the release of a revised GED in 2014 and TABE 11/12 in 2018, the implementation of the MN Standard Adult Diploma, and the focus on CCR standards, the instructional capacity of our teachers and competency performance of our students has increased.

4.4 Give an overview of college and/or career-focused programming, including Integrated Education and Training (IET) programming, transition to postsecondary programming or programming that helps students attain a recognized credential or certification.

During FY18, MCEC utilized Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) grant monies to develop and pilot two Introduction to Construction Trades cohorts at MCF-Faribault. Through a partnership with South Central College (SCC), students were dual enrolled in ABE and a SCC Customized Workforce Education program. The course was scheduled for five weeks, six hours a day, with mornings focused on the delivery of ABE contextualized reading and math and afternoons focused on the delivery of National Construction Careers Education and Research core modules and OSHA-10 certifications, using a co-teaching model. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the students completed the NCCER examinations, and all attained OSHA-10 and Northstar Digital Literacy certifications.

During FY21, MCEC utilized Perkins funds to develop a framework to deliver pre-apprenticeship programming within its secure facilities. Working in partnership with the local Laborers’ International Union of North America (LiUNA!) and Minnesota State College Southeast (MSC Southeast), the Minnesota Department of Corrections (MNDOC) is working to design and implement a pre-apprenticeship program to develop a pathway to a career in construction for minimum custody adult inmates at the Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF) Red Wing. Enrollment was limited to 25% capacity due to COVID safety restrictions, so only seven students

were allowed to participate. Four students completed the entire program and received a certificate of completion from MSC Southeast.

During FY21, MCEC also began implementing an open admissions approach to post-secondary enrollment. By eliminating standardized test entry requirements for our higher education programs, we intended to target justice involved adults who previously would have been excluded from participation. This created the opportunity for MCEC to develop support services for ABE-eligible learners enrolled in career technical and other post-secondary courses and programs that lead to higher education certificates, diplomas and/or academic degrees. The same year, MCEC was chosen to participate in the U.S. Department of Education's, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education's (OCTAE) Integrated Education and Training (IET) in Corrections pilot project technical assistance (TA) activities. This assistance was instrumental in helping us develop and implement IET within a correctional setting.

During FY22, MCEC began developing Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs at the MCF-Moose Lake and MCF-Faribault, to build career pathways for MCEC learners at every skill level. To date, MCF-Moose Lake has implemented two MDE approved IET programs (cabling and carpentry), and MCF-Faribault has implemented an MDE-approved IET program for manufacturing. Early program evaluation indicates that, although students with lower TABE skills are being enrolled in these programs, they are meeting industry expectations and overall program completion remains high.

During FY23, two new IET applications were submitted to MDE for approval, and three additional IET programs have been proposed for development and implementation during FY24. The resulting work was summarized in the DOC's FY24 ABE Transition Plan:

1. Expand IET programming within the MNDOC.
2. Evaluate the MNDOC Integrated Education and Training (IET) model as a pedagogical and procedural bridge between ABE and career technical programming.

MCEC is also working to increase the success of learners enrolled in higher education (college) courses by ensuring that comprehensive support is available to strengthen individual and collective capacity for high level achievement using a co-requisite developmental education model.

4.5 Give an overview of any current Adult Diploma programming, which allows ABE students to complete a high school diploma (not GED/HiSET). Include credit completion adult diploma programming as well as Standard Adult Diploma programming.

MCEC learners can complete 9th-12th grade credit requirements or credit recovery through participation in the High School Diploma (HSD) program. To be eligible to earn high school credit, learners must score 519 or higher in reading and 519 or higher in math on the TABE, with the expectation of reaching TABE 536 and 537 respectively. Learners aged 21 and under may complete credit for grades 9-12. Learners over 21 may complete grade 12 credit requirements. HSD program coursework is rigorous and aligned to MN K-12 state standards. Learners may complete required credits by attending ABE classes or completing online coursework, such as Edgenuity's online courses or digital learning courses. All high school coursework must be overseen by a licensed teacher. Upon completion of all required credits, a Walter Maginnis High School (WMHS located at the MCF-Red Wing) diploma is issued to the student.

Each MNDOC facility has at least one staff member trained to provide instruction and complete Standard Adult Diploma (ADP) programming. MCEC's biggest ABE program, which is located at the MCF-Faribault, redesigned part of their ABE program to focus exclusively on ADP, resulting in MCEC awarding more Standard Adult Diplomas than any other ABE consortium in the state. More recently, the MCEC has been working in tandem with the WMHS Principal and School Counselor to align its ADP courses/coursework to the WMHS Common Course Catalog (CCC). This will allow us to award high school credit to students upon successful completion of approved high school courses and submit the student's transcript as evidence of related competencies.

4.6 Describe how volunteers are utilized and trained in the consortium – N/A

MCEC does not currently utilize volunteers. Within the classrooms, approximately 200 incarcerated individuals with secondary degrees serve as tutors. Being a tutor is considered a job within the MNDOC and tutors are paid for supporting students in reaching their educational goals. ABE tutors are required to attend Literacy Action Network (LAN) Volunteer Foundations Training or adapted MCEC in-service training.

ABE tutors work under the supervision of ABE teachers to help students set academic goals and motivate them to achieve those goals; demonstrate strategies to help students understand their lessons; provide answers, possible solutions, and reviews of students' academic concerns; encourage students to participate in lessons and other educational activities; create and grade classroom materials and practice tests; and provide students feedback on their performance.

a. Indicate common activities and roles for volunteers

b. Describe how do volunteers enhance student success in the consortium

c. Describe how are the consortium’s volunteers oriented and trained

d. Indicate what training is provided and/or required on an ongoing basis for volunteers, locally and/or through other entities

Documents Section Four:

- I. [MNDOC Instructional Program Description](#)
- J. [MNDOC Multi-year Content Standards Implementation Plan](#)

Section 5: Integration and Collaboration

5.1 Provide evidence of alignment to local or regional needs and strategies as outlined by local workforce boards and/or partners in the workforce development plans (local and regional WIOA plans).

Due to MNDOC's statewide role, the state WIOA plan was reviewed. Statewide there are sixteen local workforce development boards and six workforce development regions. Goals include:

1. Prioritize diversity, inclusion, and equity;
2. Equitable systems;
3. Creating age-friendly Minnesota;
4. Future of work; and
5. Implementation.

Focus is to be on reducing disparity, filling skill gaps, having adaptive and innovative training, and unifying all services under One Minnesota.

MCEC directors and managers participate on the Workforce Development Board Career Pathways committee, various interagency committees, and community planning committees including National and Regional Corrections Education Association committees and Minnesota State Universities and College committees. Industry partners participate in advisory committees with MN DOC Career-Technical instructors. Through these committee assignments and strategic partnerships, MCEC ABE as a consortium gathers input on programming and possible collaboration networks to better prepare our students for successful re-entry and recidivism reduction.

The informal connections made between other ABE consortiums, ABE administrators and ABE teachers through the MNABE, Literacy Action Network, Literacy Education, CEA, MEA, Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) and Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE) keep the lines of communications open regarding collaborative efforts to improve secondary academic achievement, post-secondary completion, and employment attainment in Minnesota's workforce post-release for our students.

Incarcerated individuals residing within the MNDOC are not active in the workforce; however, numerous opportunities are provided to prepare them to return to the community ready to participate in the workforce.

Each MNDOC facility has a “Transition Center”, where students can access current job postings, work on resumes / cover letters and receive assistance with other issues related to their eventual transition back into our communities. The Transitions Unit coordinates job fairs and events, conducts reentry classes, community/government partnerships, and the processes for Incarcerated Individuals to successfully transition from a prison sentence obligation to supervised release into their communities.

MCEC also works closely with MINNSIR grantees and the EMPLOY program. Coordination with the Pathways to Prosperity grantees resulted in individuals being released directly into educational opportunities or job placement. The DOC’s MINNCOR Industries’ mission is to provide job readiness and training. The EMPLOY program helps prepare incarcerated individuals for employment before their release, connect them with employers after their release, and provide follow-up services to help make sure they remain employed in work that is a good fit for them. The EMPLOY Program is a voluntary employment service program providing work readiness and job search preparation for individuals who have 24 months or less to serve in their sentence. The program's mission is to reduce recidivism by providing participants with the necessary tools to locate, obtain and retain gainful employment. This is accomplished through offering work readiness and job search training; providing education to employers about creating fair hiring practices within their companies and the benefits of hiring from the second chance population; connecting skilled participants with appropriate job leads; offering follow-up support; and encouraging positive change.

All these opportunities fill skill gaps through innovative training and reduce “silo” programs duplicating services. Significant growth has been made to unify services under One Minnesota.

5.2 Describe the methods of referral between local workforce development partners and the consortium, addressing both how the consortium refers learners to workforce development partners, and how workforce development partners refer clients to the consortium. Include how the consortium promotes concurrent enrollment in Title I programs (Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker).

Re-entry release planners assist all incarcerated individuals in returning to their communities by finding housing, programs, and employment. Specialized programs can be utilized to meet the needs of regional or inclusive groups.

The Pathways Home grant facilitated by Workforce Development Inc (WDI) of SE Minnesota required coordination of referrals and services. DOC provided WDI with a list of individuals being released in the next year to the southeast counties of Minnesota. These individuals were distributed across multiple facilities. Working together, WDI staff and MCEC staff completed

referrals and then provided programming virtually and simultaneously to multiple facilities. The EMPLOY staff give large group presentations highlighting services inside and outside of the facilities. Individuals are supported in completing referrals for the program. The Cognitive Behavior Intervention-Employment program utilizes community partner co-trainers from the metropolitan area. Participants included ABE students as well as general population individuals.

5.3 Describe how instructional programming is developed and delivered in coordination and collaboration with other educational, training, and employment resources in the community. Partner entities could include K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, local workforce development boards, one-stop centers, job training programs, social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and faith communities.

ABE programming is developed and delivered using current research, best practice methods, Education Minnesota standards, and higher education entrance requirements. MCEC works directly with community schools for those students who wish to attain a high school diploma from their home school. Students complete a transcript request form which is sent to their “home” school. DOC analyzes each transcript and creates a DOC transcript which informs the student and the teacher of the number of hours the student focus in each subject area to achieve to attain their high school diploma. Subject hours are tracked, and updated transcripts are available to the student upon their request.

MCEC also works with post-secondary institutions to determine the skills and abilities potential higher education students need. Refresher courses are provided prior to enrollment in higher education. MCEC has memos of understanding and/or articulated agreements with partners in higher education, including the University of Minnesota, Mankato State University, Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis Community College, Pine Technical Community College, Lake Superior College, South Central College, Mitchell School of Law-Hamline University, North Hennepin Community College, Riverland Community College, and Ashland University. Procedures are now in place for individuals to move seamlessly from inside classes to on-campus classes upon release. Discussions continue regarding co-requisite developmental education support for students who may not be fully prepared for the college experience.

As mentioned above, coordination with Workforce Development Inc of SE Minnesota and the Pathways to Prosperity grantees has resulted in numerous individuals releasing directly to employment or to higher education programming.

Students participating in IET and Career Technical programs are being interviewed and some are provided letters of intent to hire prior to release. For example, a student with a visual

impairment completed pre-requisites prior to being released and then moved directly into an Easter Seals training program.

The degree of collaboration and coordination has increased significantly over the last year, and MCEC looks forward to formalizing current practices and adding more opportunities in the future.

5.4 Describe any collaboration with local and county correctional facilities. Address how the consortium ensures that programming in correctional facilities provides sufficient intensity and duration of instruction. Include a brief description of the instructional content and schedule(s) of ABE programming occurring in local and county correctional facilities. Include a description of all support received from the correctional institution, including financial.

All MN Adult Basic education centers, state prisons, and county jails use the digital SiD program to record student data. SiD includes information such as: personal data on each student, assessment dates and scores (GED, TABE, CASAS), current and former class schedule as well as number of ABE hours earned. This information can be accessed by all agencies listed above. This program allows agencies to view the student's prior educational history and build upon it. This allows a continuation of a person-centered and individualized education focusing on student success and achievement.

Reentry Units within each facility operate the transition centers at each facility and feature a variety of programs. Reentry Services also coordinate transitions fairs and events, pre-release classes, community/government agency partnerships, and the processes for individuals to transition successfully from their prison sentence obligation to supervised release into their communities toward the collective goal of successful reentry. These programs are accessible to offenders who are within six months to one year of release and community reentry. The "pre-release" classes cover topics such as life skills, conflict resolution, interpersonal interaction, housing and finance, health, supervised release, career exploration and planning, how to interview, and how to talk about transferrable skills and personal characteristics. The transition centers assist with case management release planning including conditions of release and agent assignment, and help individuals obtain identification such as birth certificates and social security cards.

MCEC support from the correctional institution includes "shared management". The correctional institution provides leadership, secured movement of students to and from education, as well as security in the classrooms. The institution also provides space for education as well as the utilities each education department uses. Institution supervisor meetings are held each morning to discuss any issues in the institution.

5.5 Describe any collaboration with Tribal Nations, if one or more are partially or entirely within the geographic area served by the consortium, or if the consortium serves a significant number of members of a particular Tribal Nation.

About 6-8% of the total DOC population reports as Native American or Native Alaskan. These individuals are distributed across the nine facilities. Some Tribal Nations reward native students who have earned a GED or a High School Diploma with a monetary award. This reward is deposited into the student's spending account. Information on the program is distributed upon request. The MNDOC employs a Native American Liaison who supports Tribal Nations and indigenous individuals.

5.6 Describe the consortium's role in developing and implementing the regional transitions plan.

Education leadership discuss annual priorities and the regional transitions plan is developed to support those initiatives. Currently the Integrated Education and Training (IET) application process and the approval of IET programs is a primary initiative. IET programs have proven to be highly effective in providing career training to students with a broad range of skills. (See Section 4.4) MCEC's regional transitions coordinator (RTC) participates in statewide meetings with other RTCs.

5.7 Indicate the individual who currently serves as the Regional Transitions Coordinator (RTC) for the consortium, and the individual who currently serves as the ABE Representative/s to the Local Workforce Development Board/s. How does the RTC communicate the information from the regional meetings to the entire region? How does the ABE Representative communicate the information from the LWDBs to the entire Workforce Development Area?

Dr. Patty Popp serves as the Regional Transition Coordinator and is considered a member of all the local workforce development boards. Information from the regional meetings is shared at either the monthly in-person education administration meeting or during weekly virtual updates. LWDB information is shared in a similar manner or in electronic communication to all education directors.

Documents Section Five:

- K. N/A
- L. N/A
- M. [MNDOC ABE Regional Transitions Plan](#)
- N. N/A

Section 6: Program Resources

6.1 Describe the use of technology, both in person and at a distance/hybrid learning, to improve student access to programming, enhance the quality of instruction, and lead to improved outcomes for students.

MNDOC maintains a client network, which provides individuals who are incarcerated access to data, content, resources, assessments, and learning experiences, enabling, and inspiring more effective learning and helping to prepare them to join our rapidly transforming technological world. The client network, which is separate from the administrative (staff) network, offers learner-appropriate, simulated internet programs; off-line resources; and restricted, real-time access to the Internet. The network includes the same functionalities as any other business network, with a high emphasis on security. The client network provides individuals access to over sixty (60) distinct education and re-entry software applications, curricula programs and learning platforms via desktop computers which are in classrooms, computer labs, libraries, transition centers and workstations across all DOC facilities.

The client network's restricted Internet connection uses routers and firewalls that permit only business appropriate Internet content to come through the system. For security purposes, all content undergoes a comprehensive risk assessment (vetting) and approval/permit process (whitelisting), and nonessential software programs and utilities are removed from client-use computers. Once a website has been vetted by education, a HELIX ticket is submitted to MNIT to accomplish the technical vetting and permitting.

The DOC is currently piloting client network accessibility settings by releasing magnifier, narrator, and closed captions onto specific ABE classroom computers to ensure that the functions work properly on the network. Once verified, additional accessibility settings will be released to client network computers in the areas of vision, hearing and interaction.

All ABE classrooms have an interactive whiteboard. Staff who complete training focused on security precautions that must be taken when using an internet engaged whiteboard in a correctional classroom can be issued elevated client network access, which allows them the same internet access as they would have on the administrative network. Allowing the boards to connect with the internet had been determined to be a security risk by the MNDOC. The boards have been in use for over a year, and no major security issues have occurred. However, the engagement of students in content and the enrichment of materials has resulted in improved instruction and teacher satisfaction.

The DOC partners with American Prison Data Systems (APDS) to support several secure, mobile devices (tablets) which provide centralized access to a variety of high-quality education, reentry, and rehabilitation resources. There are two ways a tablet can connect. One is through a secure cellular line which operates via a virtual circuit setup between APDS and DOC facilities to provide on-line resources recreated in an off-line environment with real-time access to the to APDS's Desire2Learn (D2L) Brightspace Learning Management System. The other is through a secured Wi-Fi system that either has been, or is being, installed in all DOC facilities. All content undergoes APDS's comprehensive assessment and approval process, and APDS provides live agent monitoring to help ensure safety and security. Education Administration are also able to access comprehensive assessment of tablet areas being accessed and communication monitoring via the tablets. Students at the Oak Park Heights supermax facility were recently provided secure APDS tablets to enhance their education experience and skill development and extend their learning time.

The DOC is currently working to further expand individuals' access to electronic learning resources by adding a DOC specific D2L Brightspace Learning Management System (LMS) to the client network to support the creation and delivery of internal and external customized courses; increasing the functionality of the DOC's internal television broadcasting play-back channels, to include centralized programming and live streaming capabilities through CableCast; and providing teleconferencing in DOC classrooms under the supervision of education staff. Future planning includes the delivery of distance learning activities through ViaPath Inspire tablets, which will soon be made available throughout the DOC. ViaPath tablets use a highly secure, customized Android operating system to deliver electronic entertainment, education, and communication options to the entire DOC population.

Technological resources currently available for learners in ABE classrooms and computer labs include:

- UltraKey 6
- CareerScope
- IXL Math, Language Arts, Social Studies and Science
- Math 180 and Read 180
- AZTEC Software
- Reading Horizons
- Edgenuity
- Northstar Digital Literacy curriculum
- Ten Sigma TRAX
- Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) 360
- WorkKeys curriculum

World Possible content (internet in a box)

Online assessments include:

eCASAS Work and Life
GED Ready and 2014 Tests
HiSET test (in-progress)
Accuplacer GenX
Northstar Digital Literacy
TABE
WorkKeys/National Career Readiness Certificate

APDS tablet applications dependent on program

APDS D2L Brightspace
EBSCO research database
Westlaw

Other technology

Interactive Whiteboards
CISCO Networking Academy Applications
Google Education
Milady Software
Simulators (Heavy Equipment Operator)
C-Tech software
DX80s
ADOBE licenses
CableCast
DOC D2L Brightspace
Scanning Pen Technology for accommodations and ESL

6.2 Describe any resources, other than state and federal ABE funding, that are used to support ABE programming. This can include financial resources, such as grant funding or charitable contributions. It can also include coordination with community partners to provide support services such as transportation, counseling or childcare.

Education scheduling is flexible, even within a generally inflexible prison system. All incarcerated individuals are required to have a “job”, which includes participation in programming (e.g.,

education) or assignment to a facility or industry job (e.g., grounds keeping, kitchen work). Learners without a secondary credential are automatically enrolled in education as seats become available. For a full-time ABE learner, education is their job. Classes are typically offered 6-hours per day, Monday through Friday. Facilities are hoping to expand programming into evenings and weekends in the future.

As MCEC works to expand its DL options, structured learning will expand outside of the classroom and beyond the traditional M-F programming hours. Individuals are now being allowed to hold certain job assignments concurrently, which allows learners who are in treatment or who hold a facility or industry job to also attend education.

Learners are housed within the facilities where our programs exist, so transportation is not an issue. In addition, childcare is not an issue, given their incarceration. Regarding health (including mental health), each facility has certified health services staff on site, and individuals can schedule appointments with nurses or doctors, as well as psychologists. Many of our ABE learners have health conditions, including learning and other disabilities. The MNDOC is prepared to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known physical or mental disabilities, to ensure equal access and opportunity.

If an individual is mandated to treatment, ABE instruction is often delayed during the duration of the treatment program. In some cases, learners who are engaged in treatment can concurrently attend education on a part-time basis. Concurrent job assignments are increasingly becoming the norm.

The Workforce Development Inc. (WDI) of Southeast MN was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant called “Pathways Home.” Pathways Home activities are coordinated across the entire DOC system. WDI works to identify individuals who will release to the ten southeastern counties of Minnesota. DOC education and re-entry staff assist WDI navigators in conducting activities within the facilities for individuals who will release within the next 180 days to southeastern Minnesota.

The DOC state agency is a member of a statewide corrections cooperative initiative called Minnesota’s Statewide Implementation of Recidivism Reduction (MNSIRR). MNSIRR encompasses multiple levels of planning and implementation, with over 100 representatives on various committees and subcommittees. Participating agencies/organizations include MN Association of Community Corrections Act counties, MN Department of Human Rights, MN Department of Public Safety, MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, MN Department of Human Services, MN Department of Education, Second Chance, Office of Justice Programs/A Division of MN Department of Public Safety, MN Sheriff’s Association, and MNDOC. This statewide initiative considers all best practices in garnering the support and resources

needed to succeed in the community, including supervision strategies, improvements in treatment outcomes, collaborative case management, cognitive skill development, and education.

The grant “MNSIRR-Employment Matters” focuses on assessing risk, needs, and job readiness, delivering targeted interventions and then making community partner referrals and follow-up. As described in Section 5, Item 1, Education plays a role in the grant by providing career technical training and soft skills development using UCCI: CBI-EMP materials.

Prior to COVID, MN DEED (Department of Employment and Economic Development) personnel would often send out training or employment opportunities to facility education directors. That time-sensitive information would be shared with learners in both ABE and post-secondary programming who would soon be releasing.

MNDOC involves business and industry with education components at the division and facility levels. Formal education and business/industry committees meet to review and make recommendations on current and proposed education programs.

Career training and higher education programs are determined by the state’s DEED identification of current and future high demand jobs. Recently developed IET programs are focused on high demand areas of telecommunications (C-TECH), manufacturing, and construction.

As previously stated, MNDOC involves business and industry with education components at the division and facility levels. Business and industry involvement help to keep programming current and in tune with the needs of employers. MNDOC advisory board connections have resulted in community businesses requesting to tour our programs and interview our learners. With the addition of IET programs, ABE learners will have more career technical options available, leading to further connections with community businesses and workforce center supports.

Most ABE administrator and some ABE teacher and support staff positions are funded with MNDOC general funding. MNDOC also provides general funding to help support many of our technology purchases and other current expenses. General funding also provides funding for the training component of our IET programs. MCEC will also benefit from the recently passed public safety bill.

With the upcoming restoration of PELL eligibility for incarcerated learners, MNDOC is engaged in an intentional and intensive expansion of its partnerships with public institutions of higher education in the state.

Exit data from MNDOC ABE into career technical or higher education programming has not historically been tracked, nor has release to employment data. As new programs are being implemented, options for more rigorous data tracking and evaluation are being assimilated.

Documents Section Six:

- O. [MNDOC Technology and Distance Hybrid Learning Plan](#)

Section 7: Successes and Challenges

7.1 Provide a brief story of student success that illustrates the power of ABE programming to make positive change for the individuals and communities served.

Below are excerpts from a graduation speech written by a former student:

My educational journey started in the small border town of Eagle Pass, TX. I grew up in a poor, but hard-working, Mexican American family of 6. We spoke Spanish at home and eventually started speaking English upon entering elementary school. I quit school due to being a dad, and to help with family responsibilities. I'm very grateful that years later, like many of you sitting here, I started with the ABC's and now I have the ADP!

I began that process in Pine in 2020, and took 3 years due to COVID lockdown, when we went to In-Unit learning. I graduated in the summer of 2022 with the Adult Diploma. When I finished my studies, I applied to be a tutor. I have taken opportunities to assist students who struggle in school, as others did with me. It's a major challenge for students, with English as a second language, to speak, read and write in English, but it's absolutely necessary if we are to succeed in the world outside of Faribault. It is so rewarding, as a tutor, to see people learn the material presented by the teacher and have the pride of working hard and know that, with continued effort and not giving up, you can do it and graduate!

Education is important to me, and I hope you continue to be a life-long learner, both for you, your family, and as an example for those who come after you. I still recall being in solitary in Texas, and one of the inmates teaching us words, back and forth through the cell bars. Here Miss H and Mr. K would encourage us to keep working hard--that it would come together and pay off. It was really tough to be in the unit, for one year, during COVID, working through the packets, and yet teachers and tutors spent time with the students, offering help in 15-minute slots. Twice, I refused to go to Minimum, because I wanted to graduate with my diploma and be a tutor. Would I do it again? Yes! I'm encouraged each day...with a positive attitude to make the most of the opportunity before me. You learn the importance of hard work, a sense of accomplishment when you didn't think you could do it. Sacrifice? You bet! But I'm 50, and I am an example to my kids that anything worth doing in life is worth doing with all you've got within you.

In conclusion, I see the importance of education, especially in helping others achieve their educational goals, a GED or ADP. I want to help students believe they can start and finish something in life that can never be taken away from them. When I am released, I know my education will help me get a better job and be a role model for younger guys to turn their lives around. I proved people wrong who told me I would never amount to anything.

7.2 Describe how the consortium responded to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Highlight any lessons learned that will serve to enhance programming for the future, even after the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented multiple challenges regarding the delivery of instruction to MCEC ABE students. Here is how DOC Education addressed the challenges:

- Provision of distance learning to all enrolled ABE students whose face-to-face class participation was impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.
- Provision of in unit tutoring by our teachers and CTAs to ABE students receiving distance learning during the pandemic.

While distance learning is better than none, MCEC learned that our ABE student population prefers face-to-face instruction. Many students expressed that they wanted more one-on-one tutoring. Some students stated that they were fine doing distance learning as a supplement but not as the primary mode of instruction.

Interactivity is key to ABE instruction. Unfortunately, when movement to the classroom is restricted, students may not have access to education except through paper and pencil assignments. ABE teachers and staff have made use of DX 80 video monitors to provide one on one tutoring and advising sessions to students if they could not go to the units due to pandemic restrictions. This practice of using DX 80 units has continued during unit shakedowns and facility lockdowns. MNDOC is also expanding wireless capabilities at its facilities which will allow enrolled students to receive devices to complete supplemental ABE instruction using approved distance learning platforms.

7.3 Describe the most pressing challenges that the consortium is currently facing. Include any ideas for addressing these challenges but note that it is acceptable to acknowledge and describe challenges even without a proposal for addressing them.

The most pressing challenges that the MNDOC/MCEC consortium is currently facing include:

- Expand services to minimize our wait list and support all ABE eligible students in their education journey. Since our student population is constantly changing, the number of students waiting to be placed in education fluctuates significantly. The time varies based on number of teachers, program design, and other student movement (graduation, discipline removal, transfer). Also impacting program growth is space limitations. Many facilities do not have additional rooms or accessible spaces to expand services. MCEC is planning to expand IET offerings to most of the facilities and as college expands, add developmental education programming. To make all these plans successful, MCEC plans to add student advisors to assist students in their education journey, personally and in their transferring between facilities.

- Improve access to educational technologies, computers, and tablets for residents. Security restrictions do not allow free movement for residents to use computers or Internet at any time. Tablet use is currently limited to college students, except for ABE students at Oak Park Heights. Tablets for students in ABE would expand education opportunities for individuals in need of their secondary credential as well as boost digital literacy skills.
- Lack of diversity in ABE teaching staff. The majority of MCEC ABE teaching staff in the identify as white, cisgender, heterosexual, and from a Christian background. Meanwhile, the demographics of Department of Corrections students look very different. From FY 18 – FY 22, 63% of ABE students identified as Black, Indigenous, Asian / Asian American / Pacific Islander, or of two or more races. Approximately 10% of DOC ABE students identify as Hispanic. Nearly 10% of our students are ELL learners.

7.3 Describe when and how the consortium addresses the issue of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), including but not limited to racial equity.

DOC Education addresses the issue of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the following ways:

Minnesota Statewide Adult Education Racial Equity Advisory Board

The Minnesota Statewide Adult Education Racial Equity Advisory Board recently created a Minnesota Adult Basic Education Learner Advisory Group to identify and address issues of equity and fairness in ABE. MND OC ABE staff, as well as four currently incarcerated ABE learners, serve on this important state entity.

In FY23 DOC Education, in conjunction with the Minnesota Statewide Adult Education Racial Equity Advisory Board, will distribute surveys to currently enrolled ABE students to seek their feedback on their academic experience, as well as their feelings of safety in the classroom, if they feel that their identities are represented in educational materials, if they have experienced any form of bias in the classroom, and if they have experienced microaggressions, bullying, or harassment in the classroom. DOC student feedback may help shape ABE strategic planning for the future.

Professional Development for MN DOC ABE Teachers and CTAs

MCEC ABE teachers and CTAs participate in a wide variety of professional development opportunities provided by MDE, ATLAS, and other professional organizations to stay current with best practices in applying DEI principles to their pedagogy and their classroom

environments. Our ABE teachers and CTAs have received training on cultural competency, trauma-informed pedagogy, microaggressions, how to work with Muslim students, and training on other DEI topics. Our teachers and CTAs display great empathy and cultural understanding with our students, and the students consistently report feeling safe and relaxed in ABE classrooms.

Co-Curricular Educational Programming / Library Resources and Services

DOC Education ABE students can supplement their learning with multicultural fiction and non-fiction from our facility libraries. Some facilities have established Diversity Committees that engage incarcerated individuals in promoting resources from the library and classrooms that are relevant to the diversity themed “months” such as Black History Month. MCEC is also expanding its reach through Educational Programming via our DOC television channels, where they will also be showing documentaries, PSAs, and other approved content related to DEI topics.

Equal Opportunity for Hiring Tutors for ABE

DOC facilities have hiring committees to review and approve hiring requests, including the hiring of ABE tutors, to ensure that each facility is hiring diverse tutors and complying with affirmative action practices. As more than half of ABE students in DOC Education are BIPOC students, it is meaningful to our students that they see teachers, staff, and tutors in the classroom who share their background. Nearly ten percent of DOC Education ABE students identify as ELL and require ELL instruction, so MCEC strives to hire bilingual tutors when possible.

Attention to students who need learning accommodations

In 2019, the MNDOC developed an ambitious agency strategic plan. One of the MNDOC’s central strategies for carrying out this plan is to develop a person-centered approach to all agency operations. The plan includes a comprehensive intake and assessment process focusing on all components of the individual’s life. As part of that process, the MCEC has developed and implemented a course to engage learners during their facility intake to explore careers, develop career pathways plans and be informed about career training opportunities within the MNDOC. The course culminates with an individualized advising session and development of a comprehensive Personal Education Plan (PEP) and provides individuals their first opportunity to self-identify as having learning and other disabilities. Multiple opportunities to learn about and access accommodations are planned throughout student’s education journey. The process, currently in pilot phase, calls for additional advising sessions at multiple times throughout the individual’s stay.

Trainings and discussions related to the use of classroom accommodations to proactively meet the needs of all learners, including learners with disabilities, occur on a regular and ongoing

basis. MNDOC teachers are encouraged to employ various classroom and assignment accommodations including breaks, stand-up desks, noise cancelling headphones, study carrels, peer tutoring, multiple methods to demonstrate knowledge, intervention software, sensory tools and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

One Minnesota Council

The One Minnesota Council on Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity was established by Executive Order to address diversity, inclusion, and equity in State government practices, including recruiting, retaining, and promoting state employees, state government contracting, and civic engagement. The Council will develop a long-range plan to identify barriers to success, metrics for measuring progress, and recommendations to achieve the Council's goals.

Recruitment of Diverse Staff

Hiring diverse staff from a variety of backgrounds allows the workforce to mirror the learner body. Different backgrounds and experiences make for a unique staff understanding, helping the education team to represent multiple facets of the community. The MNDOC intentionally recruits staff from diverse backgrounds.

MNDOC Education hiring processes are consistent with DOC Division Directive 103.009 Affirmative Action/Monitoring the Hiring Process. ([Click here](#) for DOC Division Directive 103.009.) As required by MN statutes and rules, an affirmative action plan is created every two years and attached to the Directive. The required components of the plan are stated below:

The plan contains specific components, including program objectives and hiring goals for the department. The hiring goals and selection process procedures have been set to eliminate the underutilization of qualified protected group members, except where a bona fide occupational qualification exists. The groups, which the State of Minnesota has determined to be underutilized in the workforce, include: (1) women, (2) ethnic/racial minorities, and (3) individuals with disabilities.

a. Does the consortium have a vision or strategy for addressing issues of equity? If so, how is this vision or strategy shared amongst staff? If not, how will one be developed?

Currently, the MNDOC/MCEC is focusing our equity work on an identified short fall in ensuring that individuals with disabilities are provided an equal opportunity to benefit from our programs, most notably our GED program. We have identified a meaningful shortfall regarding the numbers of individuals who are being referred into our accommodation process. According to *Disabilities Reported by Prisoners: Survey of Prison Inmates, 2016* report published by the

Bureau of Justice Statistics, “Nearly 2 in 5 (38%) state and federal prisoners had at least one disability in 2016. ... “State and federal prisoners (38%) were about two and a half times more likely to report a disability than adults in the U.S. general population (15%).

<https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/drpspi16st.pdf>

In 2019, the MNDOC developed an ambitious agency strategic plan. One of the MNDOC’s central strategies for carrying out this plan is to develop a person-centered approach to all agency operations. The plan includes a comprehensive intake and assessment process focusing on all components of the individual’s life. As part of that process, MCEC has implemented an intake program which culminates with an individual advising session and the development of a comprehensive Personal Education Plan. This process provides individuals their first opportunity to self-identify as having learning and other disabilities.

Trainings, discussions, and processes related to the identification and use of classroom accommodations are underway to ensure the needs of all students, including students with disabilities, occur on a regular and ongoing basis. We are committed to this work and to ensuring that the MCEC is fully compliant with the requirements of Title II of the ADA, by ensuring incarcerated individuals with disabilities are provided an equal opportunity to benefit from our education programs.

b. Describe any professional development focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion that the consortium has sponsored and / or participated in

Since 2020, cultural competency training has been required for all staff renewing a Minnesota teaching license. In addition to ensuring that all licensed staff are trained, MCEC encourages education administrators, career-technical credentialed teachers, and support staff to take part. The training is provided at no cost to staff and can be completed during work hours.

MCEC provides a full range of specially designed instruction and related services for eligible students with disabilities. Services to meet the special education needs, goals and objectives of a student are determined on an individual basis. Special education services may be provided in the ABE class setting, resource room, separate class, or in the student's living unit. Learners can receive services in more than one setting (e.g., some services may be provided in the general education classroom and others in a resource room). Decisions about the location and type of special education services are made by each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and based on their educational needs, thus services vary from student to student.

All MCEC instructional staff have been trained on ADA requirements and the responsibilities of MCEC to identify and evaluate learners who, within the intent of ADA, need services, accommodations, or programs to ensure equal educational opportunity. MCEC maintains an

ADA Handbook that addresses identification and referral procedures, evaluation, accommodation plans and procedural safeguards.

To assist its ABE teachers in ensuring equal educational opportunity to all learners, the DOC accesses the services of the State's Physical and Nonapparent Disability Assistance (PANDA) program. PANDA's mission is to provide Minnesota Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs with disability support, knowledge, and resources to increase academic opportunities for all learners. Their fully accessible website equips Minnesota teachers, volunteers, tutors, and managers to empower, educate and improve the lives of their students with disabilities. MCEC ABE staff are represented on the PANDA Advisory Board.

c. Indicate if the consortium is participating in diversity, equity and inclusion training or initiatives that are led by a K-12 district, how is training or initiative being made relevant for the ABE context

MCEC is not affiliated with a local school district and does not receive training led by a K-12 school district.

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Attachments

Section Two:

- A. [MNDOC Intake and Orientation Procedures](#)
- B. [MNDOC Assessment Procedures](#)
- C. [MNDOC Contact Hour Tracking Procedures](#)
- D. N/A

Section Three:

- E. [MNDOC Consortium Professional Development Plan](#)
- F. [MNDOC Individual Professional Development Plan Administrative staff](#)
- G. [MNDOC Individual Professional Development Plan Support staff](#)
- H. [MNDOC Individual Professional Development Plan Instructional staff](#)

Section Four:

- I. [MNDOC Instructional Program Description](#)
- J. [MNDOC Multi-year Content Standards Implementation Plan](#)

Section Five:

- K. N/A
- L. N/A
- M. [MNDOC ABE Regional Transitions Plan](#)
- N. N/A

Section Six:

- O. [MNDOC Technology and Distance Hybrid Learning Plan](#)

Section Eight:

- O. MNDOC Annual ABE Grant Application
 - a. [Grant Assurances](#)
 - b. [Tables](#)
- P. MNDOC Level Gains and Post Test Rates
 - a. [All Sites](#)
 - b. [MCF-Lino Lakes](#)
 - c. [MCF-Faribault](#)
 - d. [MCF-Oak Park Heights](#)
 - e. [MCF-Rush City](#)
 - f. [MCF-St. Cloud](#)
 - g. [MCF-Shakopee](#)
 - h. [MCF-Stillwater](#)
 - i. [MCF-Togo](#)
 - j. [MCF-Willow River](#)